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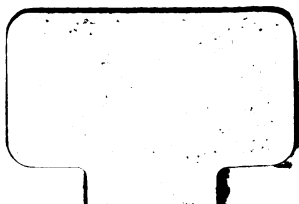
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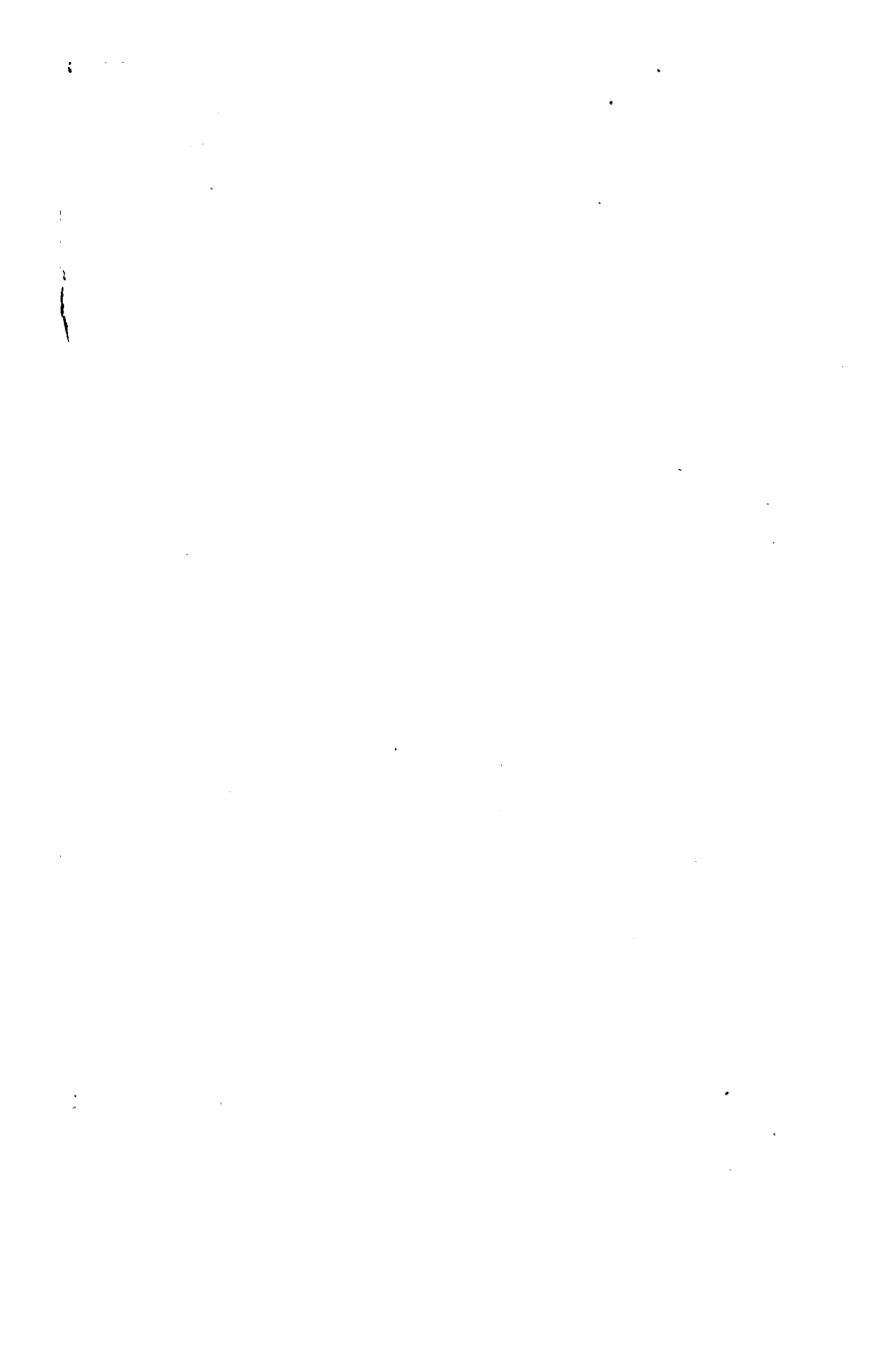
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HANDBOOK  
OF THE  
HISTORY  
OF THE  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE,  
*For the Use of Schools and Colleges.*

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## PREFACE.

THE History of the English Language, as distinct from that of the literature, constitutes a separate division of the English department, at the Civil Service and other Government examinations. An effort has been made in the following pages, to throw into as small a space as possible all such matter as is needed to meet the requirements of that single head. Indeed the present work was actually suggested by, and has been wholly planned on, the very first question on the English language, put to the candidates at the July examinations, 1858. However abstruse, however varied, or seemingly superfluous, the matter herein contained, it is but an answer, and that far from complete, to this remarkable question:—"Give a distinct account of the constitution of the English language, in respect both of the vocabulary and of the grammar, at each of the following dates: in the tenth century, when it was still what is usually called Saxon or Anglo-Saxon by modern philologists" (see the whole of sec. II.); "in the twelfth" (section III.); "in the fourteenth" (sec. V.); "in the sixteenth and in the eighteenth" (sec. VI.); "noting carefully the difference between each stage of its progress, and the immediate preceding one, and assigning the cause or causes of the change".

But, while the whole book is thus occupied in dealing with this formidable query, it may have incidentally disposed of others less exacting in their nature, *ex. gr.* second:—"Describe clearly and exactly the position and connexion of the English language (regarded in its earliest known form, which is still its basis or mould), in what is called the Indo-European family of languages" (sec. I.); the fourth:—"Compare the English language in its present state with any other, ancient or modern, with which you may be familiar, in general serviceableness and power as an instrument of expression" (sec. VI., §. 14-16); the fifth:—"Illustrate by a few decisive examples the manner in which the English language adopts words from the French (sec. V., §. 4; VI., §. 16), from the Latin (sec. VI., §. 16), and from the Greek (sec. VI., §. 17), languages



respectively; and the nature of the changes, whether in the spelling, the pronunciation, or both, by which it assimilates them, and makes them its own".

But though the work has been planned and the subject matter selected with a view to meet the requirements of these examinations, its special object may not, perhaps, render it the less generally useful, having been so compiled as to form a practical introduction both to the history of English literature and to an exact knowledge of the science of English grammar. Under the head of illustrative specimens it embraces all that need be known of the early literary history of the country from Cædmon to Sir Thomas More (680—1500), and occasions have here and there presented themselves of investigating several points of English grammār, which seemed to require explanation (sec. IV., §. 7, sec. V., §. 6, sec. VI., §. 9—11). It may thus be found a valuable text-book to the more advanced pupils of our schools and colleges, without being altogether void of interest to the general reader. A knowledge of the steps by which the language has reached its present state seems needed to the right understanding of the true principles of English grammar. Changes like *its* for *his*, *they* for *hi*, *loving* for *lovand*, are intelligible only in the light of the past; and it may be truly said that if nearly all our grammars are avowedly meaningless, often positively injurious, it is because they treat the language either in conformity with a classic model or with a total disregard of its past history and Saxon origin. Reform in this important branch of learning has been long needed, and is now required more than ever; for until our English studies be improved, our youth will not be in a position to compete on equal terms with their British rivals for the lucrative and honourable positions, which are now at once the inducement to, and reward of, a sound education.

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#### WORKS CONSULTED.

Bosworth, Rev. J., Anglo-Saxon and English Dictionary; Worcester's Great Dictionary of the English Language; Rask's Anglo-Saxon Grammar, translated by B. Thorpe; Chambers's Cyclopædia of English Literature; Warton, History of English Poetry; Horne Tooke, *επεα πρεποεσντα*, or the Diversions of Purley, with Taylor's *additional notes*; Trench's Works, especially English Past and Present; Latham's English Language; Craik's History of Literature and Learning in England; Craik's Outlines of the English Language; Spalding's 'story of English Literature, etc.

## SECTION I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

Preliminary Observations on Philological Studies—Their Importance—Classification of European Languages—Indo-European Family—Teutonic Branch—Anglo-Saxon.

1. Although this section is called introductory, the matter it treats of should not, therefore, be underrated or passed over lightly. It is, indeed, only preliminary to the main subject; yet as necessary to its right understanding as is the doorway to him who would enter a dwelling. We can have no clear notion of the structure of the English language considered in itself, or of its position in relation to others, without some acquaintance with the general principles of philology. This study has somewhere been called *speech-knowledge*. The term, though it has not been generally received, yet conveys, perhaps, a more accurate notion of the true nature and object of this department of learning in its present improved state, than is expressed by the more classic denomination. For it professes to treat of and expound the principles on which language is formed, and thus to give us a clearer insight into the structure, and a more exact *knowledge*, of *speech* in general. Comparative philology goes a step further. It applies to language, in the aggregate, the laws which regulate it in its absolute condition; and in the hands of the Christian philosopher, can have but one object in view—to demonstrate the ultimate identity of all human speech, even as we believe in the one origin of all mankind.

2. This most interesting of studies is of very recent date, and is still in its infancy. It has only grown into the dignity of a science during the present century, a very long time being necessarily spent in collecting the materials and facts it required as a groundwork, on which to build up and verify its theories. Yet, the triumphs it has achieved within the last few years are truly wonderful. Nearly all the known languages of the world have been already classified, or reduced to a certain number of great stocks, as a first step towards tracing all back to one common source. The European languages

are all comprised in two of these, which further include a vast number of Asiatic tongues. In other words, all the languages of Europe, together with more than half of those of Asia, are derived from two sources, originally and radically distinct. Some two languages at some very remote period were spoken, to which all these are directly or indirectly reducible, each aggregate constituting what in Philology is called a *family* of languages. The chief subdivisions of a family are called *branches*. A family bears the same relation to all its branches, that a branch does to all its *dialects*. Logically a family is a *genus*, comprising so many branches or *species*, which again embrace an indefinite number of *individual* dialects. Our two families or genera are called:—

(a) Finno-Tataric.

(b) Indo-European.

Any language, which is directly traceable to any other in (a) or in (b), is said to be a *dialect* of that. In this sense French may be said to be a dialect of Latin. Any language which cannot be directly traced to any other in (a) or (b), but which can be shown to belong to (a) or (b), is said to be a *branch*. Latin is a branch of (b). Were we to lose all knowledge of the fact that ever such a language existed as Latin, the Romance tongues, French, Spanish, Italian, would cease to be *dialects*—would be grouped together, and would constitute a *branch* of (b). The great problem in comparative philology is to reduce (a), (b), (c), (d), . . . to (x)=genus supremum=unity.

3. (a) The Finno-Tataric family is believed to be the most ancient in Europe, and to have at one time occupied a wider geographical area than any other in the world. In pre-historic times it is supposed to have spread over the greater portion of Europe; but, as far back as history goes, we find it already driven into the extremities north and south by the Indo-European race. At present, in its widest extent, it consists of five well-defined *branches*, which give the following scheme:—

α—Genus—Stock Language of the Finno-Tataric Family.

├──┬──┬──┬──┬──┤  
1. Tchudic. 2. Jakuto-Turkish. 3. Samojeda. 4. Tataro-Mongolian. 5. Tungus.

- I. *Tchudic* branch: (1) Finnic proper, Esthonian, Lapp of Lapland; (2) Permian, Syrjänean; (3) Volga Finn; (4) Ugrian Finn (Wogul, Magyar of Hungary).
- II. *Jakuto-Turkish* branch: (1) Uigur (Old Turkish on the Mongolian frontier, Osmanli); (2) Turkoman (from Balk to the Caspian); (3) Yakutish (in Siberia).
- III. *Samojede* branch: (1) Jurak; (2) Tavgy; (3) Ostjak; (4) Yennissei Samojede (nomad tribes on the shores of the Arctic, stretching from Archangel eastwards).
- IV. *Tataro-Mongolian* branch: (1) East Mongolian (about the desert of Gobi); (2) Burjæt (about Lake Baikal); (3) Kalmuk (in the great steppes of West Asia, and on the Lower Volga).
- V. *Tungus* branch: (1) Siberian Tungus (from the Yenissei to the sea of Ochozk); (2) Mandchoo (spoken by the ruling race in China).

Isolated languages which cannot be shown to belong to any known *family*, are called *sporadic*. There are, or have been until very recently, two such in Europe; the *Basque* and the *Albanian*. The Basque or Euscaric, which is supposed to represent the old Iberian of Spain, is spoken by the Escaldunacs of the Pyrenees. It is now believed to be connected with the Finno-Tataric family, and is used as an argument to prove that Europe was first peopled by this race. The Albanian is spoken in Turkish Albania by the Arnauts, or, as they call themselves, the Skipetari. They are now generally looked upon as the descendants of the ancient Illyrians, who skirted Greece on the north, and reached from the Adriatic into Asia Minor, including the Dacians, Phrygians, Carians, and Hellenized Macedonians and Epirots. The Skipetar was at one time referred to the Finno-Tataric, it is at present more commonly comprised in the next or Indo-European family.

4. (b) The Indo-European Family is the greatest and the most influential not only in Europe, but in the world. It reaches from the furthest limits of Cisgangetic India, through Persia and Western Asia, to the extreme west of Europe, and has, within a recent date, spread throughout North and South America and Australasia. Its branches are the following six:—

~~Genus~~ Stock Language of Indo-European Family.

1. Indian.   2. Medo-Persian.   3. Pelasgic.   4. Slavonian.   5. Keltic.   6. Teutonic.

I. *Indian* branch: (1) *Sanscrit*, the religious language of the Hindoos; (2) *Pali*, the religious language of the Buddhists; (3) *Pracrit*, the vulgar or spoken form of Sanscrit, now extinct. From these are derived the Hindustani, Bengali, etc., in all about fifty Indian dialects, together with the Gipsy of Europe.

II. *Medo-Persian* branch: (1) *Old Persian*, of the arrow-headed Persepolitan monuments; (2) *Zend*, of Zoroaster's Zend Avesta; (3) *Pehlevi*; (4) *Pazend* or *Parsi*, still spoken by the Parsees of Bombay, Modern Persian, Affghan, perhaps Armenian.

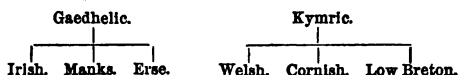
III. *Pelasgic* branch: (1) *Greek* and *Romaic*; (2) *Latin* and *Romance* (Italian, French, Spanish, Moldavo-Walachian). The Daco-Roman inhabitants of the Danubian Principalities are descended from the Roman colony planted in Dacia by Trajan.

IV. *Slavonian* branch: (1) *Lithuanian*, the best preserved of all living Indo-European tongues; (2) *Russian*; (3) *Polish*; (4) *Bohemian*; (5) *Illyrian*; (6) *Bulgarian*.

V. *Keltic* branch: (1) *Irish*; (2) *Welsh*.

VI. *Teutonic* branch: (1) *Mæso-Gothic*, which possesses the oldest literary remains (A. 380); (2) *Old Frisic*, (3) *Old High German*, (4) *Norse*.

5. The four first need not detain us further, as they are not immediately connected with the subject. The Keltic, by those who reject the Finnish theory, is generally allowed to have been the primitive language of Western Europe and of the British Isles. It is subdivided into the two following groups:—



Cornish is now extinct, and the Manks, of the Isle of Man, is fast disappearing. Welsh still holds its ground as the representative of the language universally spoken in

Southern Britain, down to the middle of the fifth century. The Gaedhelic, however, seems to have preceded it even in Wales, where Dr. Llhyud, the great Welsh antiquarian, has shown that the names of the mountains, plains, and rivers, are Irish rather than Kymric. But if it be true, as is now suspected, that the Keltic of Gaul and of the British Isles, was still one language at the Christian era, Dr. Llhyud's statement will only prove that the Keltic of Britain has since then considerably fallen off, and that the Keltic of Ireland has preserved itself in comparative purity.

6. But by far the most important branch of the Indo-European family, in connection with the present subject, is the Teutonic.

It comprises the three following subdivisions :—

- (a) High German.
- (b) Low German.
- (c) Scandinavian.

(a) The *High German* includes all the dialects that prevail on the hilly lands of Southern Germany; such are the Swiss, Suabian, Bavarian, and German Proper. The stages of this latter are :—

- a. Old High German, spoken in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries in Suabia, Bavaria, and Franconia.
- β. Middle High German, from the twelfth to the sixteenth century.
- γ. New High German, the general literary language of Germany at the present day.

(b) The *Low German* embraces all the languages spoken on the plains and coast of Northern Germany, between the Rhine and the Elbe. These are principally the Frisian, Old or Continental Saxon, Low Dutch of Holland, Flemish, and the dialects of Hanover, Oldenburgh, Schleswig, and Holstein.

(c) To the *Scandinavian branch* belong the *Old Norse*, Icelandic, Feroic, Dalekarlian, Swedish, Danish, and Norwegian. Of these the Icelandic still closely resembles the Norse, having experienced little change since the twelfth century. It is by far the best preserved of all living Teutonic tongues.

7. Though there is much difference of opinion amongst writers as to the exact locality of the German tribes that invaded Britain in the fifth century, yet all agree in bringing them from that part of Northern Germany, which lies between Western Flanders and Schleswig. The languages which they spoke and introduced into the country must, therefore, have belonged to the *Low German* branch; consequently to it must be referred the Anglo-Saxon and Modern English. Of the Low German dialects, that which most resembles the English to this day is the Frisian. This tongue, at one time generally prevailing from Holland to Jutland, is now broken up into the following varieties:

*α*. Frisian proper, in the province of Frisia; *β*. Westphalian or Hanoverian Frisian, spoken only in the fenny district of Saterland; *γ*. Frisian of Heligoland; *δ*. North Frisian, current in Schleswig. The only one possessing any remains is the first, whose literature dates from the thirteenth century. These Frisians, whose pronunciation resembles that of the west Somersetmen, still look upon the English as their kinsmen, and the resemblance of the two speeches is certainly very remarkable. As a specimen, Mr. Halbertsma gives in Bosworth's Anglo-Saxon Dictionary the following Frisian version of one of the Countess of Blessington's songs:—

Hhwat bist dou, libben?  
Jen wirch sribjen  
Fen pine, noed in soarch;  
Lange oeren fen smerte  
In nocten ho koart!  
Det fordwine de moarns.  
Déad, hwat bist dou,  
Ta hwaem allen buwgje,  
Fen de scepterde kening ta  
de slawe?

What art thou, life?  
A weary strife  
Of pain, care, and sorrow;  
Long hours of grief  
And joys, how brief!  
That vanish the morrow.  
Death, what art thou,  
To whom all bow,  
From sceptered king to  
slave?

Nor, can there be any doubt that the Frisians were among the first invaders of the country. In the Life of St. Swibert, we read: "Ecgburtus sitiens salutem *Frisonum* et *Saxonum*, eo quod Angli ab iis propagati sunt".

8. The other invading tribes, we are told, were the Jutes, Saxons, and Angles, who, coming over at intervals, ultimately succeeded in occupying the whole of what is now

called England. These settlements are said to have taken place in the following order :

- i. Jutes, under Hengist and Horsa, settled in Kent and the Isle of Wight in 449 or 450.
- ii. Saxons, under Ælla, in Suth Seaxna-ric, or Sussex, in 477.
- iii. Saxons, under Cerdic, in West Seaxna-ric, or Wessex, in 493.
- iv. Saxons, in East Seaxna-ric, or Essex, in 530.
- v. Angles, during the reign of Cerdic, in Norfolk and Suffolk, 527.
- vi. Angles, under Ida, between the Tweed and Forth, in 547.

Our principal authority for this statement is the *Historia Ecclesiastica*, of the venerable Bede, written at the beginning of the eighth century. It thus appears that the Jutes occupied Kent, the Isle of Wight, and a portion of the opposite coast; the Saxons peopled all the rest of the country south of the Thames and of the Avon, besides Essex, Middlesex, and Hertford; the Angles took possession of the remainder of the Island, reaching as far north as the Forth and Clyde, and west to Wales. From these latter it received the name of Ængla-land, or England, although this word would be, according to Thierry, a contraction of the more comprehensive designation Engel-Seaxna-land, just as West Seaxna-ric became Wessex. Until very recently the Jutes were assumed to have come from Jutland in Denmark; but Dr. Latham has shown that this is a mistake, arising probably from a fancied resemblance between the two names. The readings in Bede's MSS. vary considerably. In one place they are called Juti, in another Vitæ, and elsewhere Gutæ. That they could not have been Danes seems quite certain; for not the slightest trace of Danish or Norse is found in the Kentish dialect, of which there are extant remains dating from the fourteenth century. It should, however, be remarked that at the time the Jutes are represented as having come over, and even much later on, the difference between the Low German and Norse tongues was very slight. Alfred, in the ninth century, is said on one occasion to have pene-



trated into the Danish camp, disguised as a harper, and to have entertained the army with his Saxon songs, because, as the chronicle says, "*Lingua Danorum Anglicanæ loquelæ vicina est*". On the whole it appears highly probable that this *Jutarum natio* of Bede were in reality a tribe of western Goths, who crossed over from Gaul in the fifth century, to assist the southern Britons against the incessant attacks of their northern enemies, the Picts and Scots. They are expressly called Goths in Asser's Life of Alfred, and Gaet in Alfred's own works. If so, they were nearly related to the other two invading tribes.

9. These, we have seen, were the Saxons and the Angles. Bede tells us that the Saxons came from that district of Germany, which was in his time known by the name of the Country of the Old Saxons, that is, the tract lying between the Elbe and the Eider. Yet this is the very region that the Saxon chronicle points out as the home of the Angles: "*Eald-Seax, Anglorum antiqua patria*". In reality, at the time of the invasion there was no substantial difference between these two tribes, not more, perhaps, than between a north countryman and a southern, or than afterwards existed between the Saxons of Essex, and the Angles of the adjoining county of Suffolk. Bede himself speaks of them as of one race: "*Anglorum sive Saxonum gens*". It is, moreover, quite certain that they looked upon themselves all along as brethren of one family. It is remarkable that it was a *Saxon*, Egbert, king of Wessex, who first gave the name of *England* to the whole country (830 A.D.). And King Ida's laws recognize only two races, the Welsh and the English. This name seems to have been readily adopted by all the successive invading tribes, and even the so-called Jutes of Kent were termed Engle-kin, that is of English race. We may conclude, then, with Latham, that the invaders bore two names: *Angle*, designating those tribes that came from the more northern parts of Germany bordering on Denmark, and which they appear as a nation to have preferred; and *Saxon*, by which they were best known to the Romans, Franks, and Kelts. To these latter, indeed, whether Welsh, Highlander, or Irish, they were never known by any other

than that of *Sassanach*. To account for this, we should remember that for nearly a century before they effected a permanent settlement in the country, Saxon tribes infested the whole eastern coast of England from the Wash to the Isle of Wight, which from this circumstance was designated as the "*Littus Saxonicum*" in the *Notitia utriusque Imperii*, embracing the history of the empire from the year 369 to 408. Consequently, long before the appearance of the Angles, the term Saxon had become too familiar to the old Britons or Welsh to be ever afterwards set aside for another, especially as both meant much the same thing. From the Britons it passed to the Picts and Irish Scots, who were at that time in the habit of making constant inroads into the southern parts of the island.

10. With regard to the term *Anglo-Saxon*, Mr. Craik remarks, in his excellent *Outlines of the English Language*, that "whether as applied to the language or to the people by whom it was spoken, it must be understood to mean, properly, Saxon of England as distinguished from Saxon of the Continent; just as Anglo-Norman means Norman of England, as distinguished from Norman of the Continent. It is a compound formed on the principle of assuming Saxon as the name of the people and of the language, and England as that of the country. The Anglo-Saxon is merely one dialect of Saxon, as the Continental or Old Saxon is another. It cannot mean, as is sometimes supposed, the language of the Angles and Saxons". And in the advertisement to the third edition of his work he says that he has everywhere discarded the terms *Saxon* and *Anglo-Saxon*, "as not only unauthorised by the facts of the case, but absurd and eminently misleading". Yet, this time-honoured compound does seem to us by no means absurd, and sufficiently intelligible withal. It need not mean the Saxon of England, in the same way that Anglo-Norman denotes the Norman of England, or the Anglicised Norman; but, when applied to the people, it very fittingly designates a nation that has been formed by the blending of the two distinct tribes of Angles and Saxons; and when applied to the language, it means not the Saxon of England, as opposed to that of the mainland, but the

speech which was common to the two tribes from the beginning, and which was as much *Angle* as it was *Saxon*. Anglo-Norman implies a corrupt or English-Norman. Anglo-Saxon does not imply a corrupt or English-Saxon, but Angle+Saxon as a nation, Angle=Saxon as a language.

11. The Angles are generally believed to have emigrated from the small territory still known by the name of Anglen, in the duchy of Schleswig. But much importance cannot be attached to this statement. It is not easy to understand how such a narrow tract as Anglen could have supplied the numerous bands of invaders who from time to time poured into England, even though we suppose with Bede that it was left unpeopled for several generations afterwards. In reality such terms as *Angle*, and *Saxon*, and *Frank*, and *Goth*, were not then so much geographical, denoting fixed or even pure populations, as the names of roving tribes, often formed by a mixture of several nations, and ever shifting to and fro. So the Angles, as *Alfred* tells us in *Orosius*, were not restricted to any particular spot, but spread over the whole of the modern kingdom of Denmark, Jutland, Zealand, and neighbouring islands: on *thām landum eardodon Engle aer hi hider on land comon*, i.e., in those lands dwelt the Angles ere they hither-land came. Bede's assertion may now be explained as meaning that those countries remained unoccupied after the departure of the Angles until they were subsequently repeopled by men of Scandinavian race.

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#### QUESTIONS.\*

[The numbers refer to those of the paragraphs in each Section.]

1. What is the nature and object of Philology in general? In what does it differ from Comparative Philology?
2. In Philology, what is a *family*? a *branch*? a *dialect*? How many families in Europe?
3. What are the branches of the Finno-Tataric? What is a sporadic language? How many in Europe? Who are the Basques? the Albanians? the Magyars?

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\* These, and following series of questions, are only suggestive, and intended as a guide, especially to teachers. They may occasionally help to draw attention to important matter, which might otherwise pass unnoticed in the perusal of the text.

4. Name the principal regions occupied by the Indo-European family. How is it distributed? Who are the Wallachians?

5. State the two subdivisions of the Keltic branch, with their respective dialects. Who are supposed to have been the earliest inhabitants of Britain?

6. Mention the three off-shoots of the Teutonic branch. Which is the purest of all living Teutonic languages?

7. To which of the Teutonic subdivisions do you refer the Anglo-Saxon? Why? What modern German language resembles most the English?

8. Name the three principal German tribes that invaded Britain in the fifth century. How did they occupy the country? There are reasons for believing that the Jutes had nothing to do with the modern Jutland: whom does Dr. Latham say they were?

9. Show that there was no real difference between the Saxons and the Angles. The English are still called Sassanach by all the Kelts: account for this.

10. Mr. Craik's objection to the use of the compound term Anglo-Saxon seems to be unfounded.

11. What is to be thought of the statement that the Angles came from Anglen in Schleswig?

## SECTION II.

(450-1066).

Periods of the English Language—Anglo-Saxon Period—Alphabet—Orthography—Grammar—its Synthetic Character—Vocabulary—Foreign Elements—Dialects—Verse—Specimens.

1. The Low German speech, introduced by these different tribes in the fifth century, flourished in the country altogether for about six hundred years, or was as nearly as possible coëxtensive with the sway of those that spoke it (450-1066). A period of decay then set in, the germs of which existed from the beginning, and out of this corruption was gradually developed the language as at present spoken and written. Rightly to understand the connection between the two, between the Anglo-Saxon and its modern English off-shoot, account must be taken of the various steps by which the transition was effected. For the English language, as now spoken, was not the growth of a moment, nor did it suddenly attain to its present high state of perfection. By a consideration alone of the intermediate stages, which at once separate and connect the two

extremes, we shall be able to understand how the result was obtained. These stages, or epochs, or periods of the history of the language, are not very easy to fix, because it is often difficult to show the last link of one, and the first of another chain. Hence they vary considerably in different writers. It is obvious, however, at first sight, that there can be but three really distinct divisions of the subject, the two fixed extremes—Anglo-Saxon and Modern English—together with the unsettled and ever-changing middle state between these two. These three different states of the language have been called by various names. The first, that of *Pure*, or *Simple*, or *Saxon-English*; the second, that of *Broken*, or *Ungrammatical*, or *Semi-English*; the third, that of *New*, or *Modern*, or *Mixed-English*. The second alone can occasion any difficulty. It is usually and conveniently subdivided into three others, which, with the first and third, will give us the following periods to be investigated :—

*Periods.*

I. Anglo-Saxon,	A.D.	450,	lasted	600 years,	till
II. Semi-Saxon,		1066,	"	150	"
III. Early English,		1200,	"	150	"
IV. Middle English,		1350,	"	100	"
V. Modern English,		1450,	"	—	

2. We shall never be able to form any notion of the difference between our language and the Anglo-Saxon, and of how the change was effected, unless we be content to go back and see what the original really was. Indeed, the importance of some acquaintance with the Anglo-Saxon can hardly be overrated. It is beyond all doubt the very best means of acquiring a thorough knowledge of the structure of our own speech; for it is to us what Latin is to the Italians, French, and Spaniards—what Old Norse is to the Danes and Swedes. One cause, perhaps, of the neglect into which Anglo-Saxon studies have fallen, is the fact of their having employed a form of writing different from the present. It was assumed practically, that when the old character was laid aside for the modern, the language ceased to be Saxon, and should be studied with reference

to a classic model. In reality the Anglo-Saxon alphabet differed but very little from the Latin, of which it was not so much a corruption as a mere variety, or, so to say, a sort of hand employed by the Saxons even in the writing of Latin itself. Hence, it is now very properly superseded by the modern form, those characters only being retained which were peculiar to it, viz., þ=*th* hard, as in *thin*, and ƿ=*dh*=*th* soft, as in *then*. As these two letters express sounds of constant occurrence in English, it is much to be regretted that they were not preserved when the transition was effected from the old to the new system. They were, indeed, generally retained in English and Latin MSS. down to the reign of Edward III. But the Norman transcribers of Saxon books always substituted their own orthography for the Anglo-Saxon, and that ultimately prevailed in all cases. The alphabet consisted altogether of twenty-four letters :—

a, as in *fat*.

b.

c, always hard=k, cining=king. Wuce=week.

d.

e=ea in *bear*.

f=v when between two vowels. Lufe=lufe=love.

g, always hard. Gifan=give.

h.

i=ee, in *sheep*=y before e or u. iugoƿ=youth.

l-m-n-o-p-r-s-t-u-w-x-æ.

y=French u, brýd=bride, or German eu=fýr=fire.

þ=θ=*th* in *thing*.

ƿ=dh=*th*, in *this*.

At the beginning of pronouns and adverbs, the modern English substitutes the soft *th*=ƿ for the hard=þ, as þu=thou, as if from ƿu, þær=there, etc., where the change of pronunciation is not observable, because *th* represents both þ and ƿ.

3. Hyde Clarke, in his *Grammar of the English Tongue*, says that the Anglo-Saxon alphabet “is likewise found in some Irish books, the Irish having taken this alphabet from our English forefathers”. The very contrary, we venture to say, was the case. To the Irish “our English forefathers” were indebted for all the literature and learning they possessed, and the Irish, two hundred years

before the Anglo-Saxons knew how to read or write, employed this very alphabet, not in *some*, but in all of their books, whether in Latin or in the vernacular. Alban Butler, in his life of St. Austin, observes that "the Saxons were a barbarous race, unacquainted even with the art of writing previous to their arrival in England, where they adopted their alphabet from the Irish". þ, however, is from the Runic.

4. Not one of the least difficulties to the Anglo-Saxon student is the very unsettled state of the orthography. This must be peculiarly perplexing in a language in which a single vowel often changes the case or number of a noun. Rask, who has done much to remedy the evil in his excellent Anglo-Saxon grammar, describes the orthography as extremely confused, observing that Hickes and Lye, the Saxon editors, have caused it to appear much more so than it is in reality, by "everywhere presenting us with an overwhelming multitude of ways in which a word is written, and not unfrequently adopting the false instead of the true spelling". The word *self* is written *seolf*, *self*, and *sylf*; *we shall*, *we sceolon* and *sculon*; *long*, *lang* and *long*; *man*, *man*, *mon*; *head*, *heáuod*, *heáfod*; *they*, *hig*, *hie*, *hí*; *dry*, *dri*, *drig*, *dryg*; *you*, *geow*, *eow*. The accent also is constantly neglected, although it is often the only clue to the meaning of the word, as *ac*=but, *ác*=an oak, *is*=is, *ís*=ice, etc. The accent generally denotes the long or broad sound of the vowels; thus *for*, *fór*, should be pronounced for, fore. *God*=God; *gód*=good, like *goad*. But the real pronunciation of Anglo-Saxon, being now a dead language, can often be only guessed at and conjectured, especially by reference to the living cognate tongues, Icelandic, Danish, German, and others.

5. The grammar may be generally described as of a *synthetic* character. This will be perfectly intelligible to any one possessing the slightest knowledge of the classic tongues, but may require explanation for those that are unacquainted with any but their own. *Synthesis* (*σύν* with, *thesis* a placing) implies *composition*, or a putting together. Two things seem to be needed in every language in order to make complete sense: the expression of our *notions* or

*ideas*, and the expression of the relation these notions bear one to another. In this respect words have been divided into two great classes, the *notional* and the *relational*. The language which fuses these two into one, and effects the purpose by a simple change or modification of the notional, is said to be a synthetic language, and will be so to a greater or lesser extent in proportion to the use it makes of the relational (see page 110). The Anglo-Saxon makes a very considerable use of these. It is, therefore, only synthetic in a moderate degree. Consequently the changes or inflexions of its words are fewer, and its grammar much simpler, than the Latin or the Greek. As the only real difference between Anglo-Saxon and modern English consists in the almost total absence of these inflexions from the latter, a slight acquaintance with them will be necessary to understand the nature of the change.

6. The definite article was twofold: 1. The indeclinable, where our *the*, but used also relatively, and as a demonstrative pronoun. 2. The declinable, neutral *þæt*; masculine, *se*; feminine, *seó*, which corresponds also to the demonstrative *is*, *ea*, *id*. It is declined as follows:

Sing. N. A. <i>Neut. Mas. Fem.</i>				Plur. N. A.			
	<i>þæt</i>	<i>se</i>	<i>seó</i>		<i>þá</i>		
A.	<i>þæt</i>	<i>þone</i>	<i>þá</i>	D.	<i>þam</i>	} for all numbers.	
Ab.	<i>þy</i>	<i>þære</i>		G.	<i>þara</i>		
D.	<i>þam</i>	<i>þære</i>					
	<i>þæm</i>						
G.	<i>þæs</i>	<i>þære</i>					

Both of these articles are constantly blended together, *se-þe he who*, *þætte* (contracted for *þæt þe*) *that which*, as: *ic wát þætte eall þæt ic her sprece is wi þinum willan, I know that all that I here speak is against thy will.*

7. There is no fixed rule to determine the gender of the nouns. These were originally regulated, not so much by nature, as in English, as by the terminations, which were already in great part lost or confounded in the most ancient state of the language we are acquainted with. All words in *a*, however, are masculine, as *se mona*, the moon. Of declensions there are two orders, the *simple* and the



*complex.* To the first are referred all nouns ending in a *radical e* for the feminine and neutral, and *a* for the masculine, which are declined in exactly the same manner, except that, as in Latin, the neuter N. and A. for both numbers is always alike. This order also includes the *definite* form of all adjectives, *i.e.* the form of the adjective, which is used when it is preceded by the definite article, any demonstrative or possessive pronoun, and the possessive case. *Simple Order*, or first *Declension*.

SINGULAR.		
<i>Neut.</i>	<i>Mas.</i>	<i>Fem.</i>
N. <i>eáre</i> (ear)	<i>nama</i> (name)	<i>heorte</i> (heart)
G. D. <i>eáran</i>	<i>naman</i>	<i>heortan</i>
A. <i>eáre</i>	<i>naman</i>	<i>heortan</i>
PLURAL.		
<i>Neut.</i>	<i>Mas.</i>	<i>Fem.</i>
N. A. <i>eáran</i>	<i>naman</i>	<i>heortan</i>
D. <i>eárum</i>	<i>namum</i>	<i>heortum</i>
G. <i>eárena</i>	<i>namena</i>	<i>heortena</i>

So the definite adjective:—

SING.		
<i>Neut.</i>	<i>Mas.</i>	<i>Fem.</i>
N. <i>þæt swifte</i> ,	<i>se swifta</i> ,	<i>seo' swifte</i> (the swift),
G. D. <i>swifan</i> ,	<i>swifan</i> ,	<i>swifan</i> ,
A. <i>swifte</i> ,	<i>swifan</i> ,	<i>swifan</i> .

PLUR. FOR ALL GENDERS.

N. A. <i>þá swifan</i> ,
D. <i>swifum</i> ,
G. <i>swiftena</i> .

It thus appears that in this order there are, in reality, not more than three inflexional forms: *-an* for all the oblique cases in the sing., and the Nom. and Acc. plural; *-um* for the Dat. and Abl.; and *-ena* for the Gen. Plural: *nama*, *naman*, *namum*, *namena*.

8. The next, or complex order, is much more intricate, comprising two distinct declensions, each varying for all the three genders. We can spare room for the masculines only of the first of these, which, of all the A.S. declensions, is the most interesting to us, as that to which all English

nouns have been conformed so far as they are inflected. It is as follows:—

Sing. N. A. <i>weg</i> , a way,	Plur. N. A. <i>wegas</i> , ways,
G. <i>weges</i> , way's,	G. <i>wega</i> , ways',
D. Abl. <i>weg</i> , to and by a way.	D. Abl. <i>wegum</i> , to and by ways.

Here is the true origin of the only changes to which the English noun is subjected, and about which, simple as the matter is, so many wild theories were started, at a time when the English tongue was believed to be made up of Latin, Greek, French, some Hebrew, and a little Saxon. The plural *s* was at once referred to the French, because it happened to agree with the usage of that tongue; and the possessive 's was supposed to be a contraction of *his*. It was even customary to write the word in full, thus: the king *his* name, for the king's name, in imitation of an imaginary antique state of the language. But the Saxons were too sensible to talk of the queen *his* name, the stream *his* name, etc. We do not remember if these forms occur side by side with the previous; but they ought to, if we are to be consistent with ourselves.

9. Besides the definite form already explained, the adjectives have an indefinite corresponding to the complex order of nouns, but of a much simpler nature. The indefinite form of *swift* is as follows:—

SING.			PLUR.	
<i>Neut.</i>	<i>Masc.</i>	<i>Fem.</i>		
N. <i>swift</i> ,	<i>swift</i> ,	<i>swift</i> ,	N. A. <i>swift</i> e,	} for all Genders.
A. <i>swift</i> ,	<i>swiftne</i> ,	<i>swift</i> e,	D. <i>swiftum</i> ,	
			G. <i>swift</i> ra.	
N. <i>swift</i> e,	} <i>swiftre</i> .			
D. <i>swiftum</i> ,				
G. <i>swift</i> e.				

Example of the use of the definite and indefinite forms:—

*a* swift horse—*án* swift hors,  
*the* swift horse—*se* swifta hors,  
*of* swift horses—*swiftra* horsa,  
*of the* swift horses—*para* swiftena horsa.

In the same way are declined all past participles in *od* and *ed*, and the participles present, both definitively and indefinitely, with the single exception of the Gen. Plur.,

whose definite form is *ra* instead of *ena*, as : *pára rihtwíllendra* for *rihtwíllendena*, of the upright.

10. The degrees of comparison are in *-or* and *-ost*, where it should be observed that *-or* is *always* adverbial, its definite and indefinite form being *-re*, *-ra*, *-re*. *Ost* is adverbial and indefinite, making  $\begin{cases} \textit{oste osta oste} \\ \textit{este esta este} \end{cases}$  in the definite. Example :

*Comparative :*

*swiftor, more swiftly, adv.*

*swiftre, swiftra, swiftre, swifter and the swifter, adj. def. and indef.*

*Superlative :*

*swiftost, most swiftly and swiftest, adv. and adj. indef.*

*swifteste, swiftesta, swifteste, the swiftest, adj. def.*

Some of the irregulars in *mest* are still retained in English, as : *inn*, *innor*, *innemest*, *in*, *inner*, *inmost*, etc.

11. The personal pronouns generally resemble our own, but are remarkable for having preserved in the first and second persons the only remnant of the dual form to be found in the language.

1st Person	2nd Person.	3rd Person.		
Sing. N. <i>ic</i> (I.)	<i>þu</i> (thou)	N. <i>hit</i> (it, he (he),	<i>heó</i> (she)	
A. <i>me</i>	<i>þe</i>	A. <i>hit</i>	<i>hine</i>	<i>hí</i>
G. D. <i>min</i>	<i>þin</i>	D. <i>him</i>	<i>him</i>	<i>hire</i>
		G. <i>his</i>	<i>his</i>	<i>hire</i>

Dual. Pl.		Dual. Pl.			
N. <i>wit</i>	<i>we</i>	<i>git</i>	<i>ge</i>	Plur. N. <i>hí</i> (they) D. <i>him &amp; heom</i> G. <i>hira &amp; heora</i> } for all genders	
A. D. <i>unc</i>	<i>us</i>	<i>inc</i>	<i>eow</i>		
G. <i>uncer</i>	<i>úre</i>	<i>incer</i>	<i>eower</i>		

*Sylf* (self) is declined both indefinitely, as : *ic swerige þurh me sylfne*, I swear by myself; and definitely, as : *on Ǿá sylfan tíð*, at the same time. The demonstrative *þis þes þeós* (*hoc*, *hic*, *hæc*) makes in the plural *þás* and *þæs*, whence our two forms, *these*, *those*, with a difference of meaning. The remaining pronouns present no sort of difficulty, and are recognized at a glance, as : *sum*, *some*, *a*, *manig*, *many*, etc.

12. Whilst the nouns and adjectives are exceedingly rich in grammatical forms, the verb presents in this respect a marked contrast to the classic languages, having at a

very remote period lost the great bulk of its inflexions. This must have occurred before the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons in England, as we find it to be the case in the other cognate languages, though not quite to the same extent. The passive voice has completely disappeared, together with all the tenses of the indicative and subjunctive modes active, except the present and imperfect. There remain but thirteen actual changes to which the verb is subjected, of which five, and in some cases six, are retained in modern English; consequently, were it not for the irregularity of many of these forms, and their ill-defined nature, the whole verbal system could be mastered in half an hour's study. There are two orders of verbs, corresponding to the two orders of nouns, the simple and the complex. The first, which has been called the *weak* conjugation, is pretty much the same as our ordinary method, the imperfect ending in *de* or *te*, and the past participle in *d* or *t*. The complex, or *strong* conjugation, is the source of all our so-called irregular verbs, in which the imperfect is a monosyllable formed by a change of vowel, and the past participle is in *-en* or *-n*. In the strong conjugation, the verb develops, within itself, its inflexional forms, by a change of the radical vowel: *drive, drove, driven*; in the weak it requires the aid of an additional syllable: *love, loved*. The former is most in accordance with the genius of the Teutonic tongues; the extensive adoption of the latter is a sure symptom of decay: according to it are conjugated all new and imported words, for as a rule the stock of strong verbs never is increased. Here *make* has only in appearance become strong by contraction: *made*=*mak-ed* from *macod*. The best test in modern English of a strong verb is the participial termination. Those in *-en* or *-n* are strong: *hide, know, speak, get*, etc. All others are *weak*, either *regular* or *irregular*: *love* is *regular*; *make, have, lose*, *irregular*. A strong verb should never be called *irregular* until it drop the final *en*: English strong verbs have this tendency: *got* for *gotten*, *hid* for *hidden*.

## FIRST ORDER (WEAK FORM).

ic macige,	macode,	macod,
I make.	made.	made.

## SECOND ORDER (STRONG FORM).

breke,	bræc,	brocen,
I break.	broke.	broken.

## EXAMPLE OF FIRST ORDER.

## INDICATIVE.

<i>Present.</i> —lufge,	love.	<i>Imperf.</i> —lufode,	loved.
lufast,	lovest.	lufodeſt,	lovedſt.
luſaþ,	loveth.	lufode,	loved.
luſiaþ }	we, you, they love.	lufodon,	„
and luſge,			

## SUBJUNCTIVE.

<i>Pres.</i>	<i>Imperf.</i>
Sing. 1, 2, 3 luſge.	Sing. 1, 2, 3 lufode.
Plur. 1, 2, 3 luſion.	Plur. 1, 2, 3 lufodon.

## IMPERATIVE.

Sing. 2 luſa.	Plur. 2 luſiaþ and luſge.
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## INFINITIVE.

<i>Present</i> —luſian—to love.
<i>Gerund (to)</i> —luſigenne—to love.
<i>Act. part</i> —luſigende—loving.
<i>Pass part.</i> —(ge)-luſod—loved.

Here the three persons pl. of the pres. ind. are alike, and the same as the pl. imperative. The three pers. pl. imperfect are also alike, and the same as those of the imperfect subjunctive. The 1st and 3rd sing. imperf. ind., and the singular of the imperf. subj. correspond in the same way, leaving, as above stated, only thirteen actual grammatical inflexions. The present is used instead of the future, and the other nice distinctions of time were but indifferently expressed, which was one of the chief causes of the obscurity attaching to Saxon writings in general. Another undoubtedly was, not the great number of forms in the noun and adjective, but their want of variety, and their exceedingly vague and unsatisfactory character. Endings like *-orum*, *-ibus*, *-abam*, *-averunt*, in Latin, are too striking to be easily forgotten, or not to be readily recognized again. Whereas the A.S. *e* and *a*, *es* and *as*, etc., are so alike, and used for so many different cases, that confusion is often difficult to be avoided. On the whole, this language, when it began to be employed for literary purposes, was already considerably weakened, and ready to be broken up altogether on the first occasion.

13. The following extract from Alfred's free version of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*, may help to illustrate the foregoing principles of the grammar, and to show how far it differs from modern English:—

We sculon<sup>1</sup> get of ealdum<sup>2</sup> leasum<sup>3</sup> spellum<sup>3</sup> þe sum  
 We shall (must) yet (now) of old lying tales to thee some  
 biþpell<sup>3</sup> reccan. Hit gelamp<sup>4</sup> gió þætte án hearpere wæs<sup>5</sup>  
 by-tale reckon (tell). It happened (long) ago that a harper was  
 on þære<sup>6</sup> peode<sup>6</sup> þe<sup>7</sup> þracia hátte.<sup>8</sup> Þæs<sup>9</sup> nama wæs<sup>5</sup> Orfeus. He  
 in the land that Thrace hight. His name was Orfeus. He  
 hæfde<sup>10</sup> án swíthe ænlic<sup>11</sup> wif.<sup>11</sup> Seó wæs<sup>5</sup> hátan<sup>12</sup>  
 had a very one-like (unique) wife. She was hight  
 Eurydice. Þa ongann<sup>13</sup> menn<sup>14</sup> secgan<sup>22</sup> be þám<sup>15</sup> hearpere,<sup>15</sup>  
 Eurydice. Then began man say by (of) the harper,  
 þæt he mihte<sup>16</sup> hearpian þæt se wudu wagode<sup>17</sup> for þam swege,  
 that he might harp so-that the wood waved for the sough,  
 and wilde deor<sup>18</sup> þær woldon<sup>19</sup> to-irnan and standan swilce hi  
 and wild beasts thither would to-run and stand as if they  
 táme wæron,<sup>5</sup> swá stille þeáh hi menn<sup>20</sup> oððe hundes<sup>21</sup> with<sup>23</sup>  
 tame were, so still though them men or hounds against  
 eódon,<sup>23</sup> þæt hi hi ná ne onscunedon. Þa sædon<sup>24</sup> hi þæt  
 went, that they them not not shunned. Then said they that  
 þæs<sup>9</sup> hearperes<sup>15</sup> wif sceoldé acwelan,<sup>25</sup> and hire<sup>26</sup> sawle mon<sup>14</sup>  
 the harper's wife should die, and her soul man  
 sceoldé<sup>1</sup> lædan to helle.<sup>27</sup>  
 should lead to hell.

1. Scealan, to owe (defective), ic sceal, we sculon; subj. imperf. ic sceolde, we sceoldon, implies obligation, hence its subsequent future meaning.

2. From eald (old), leas (false), and spell (a tale), *um*, universal, Dat. and Abl., Pl. for all nouns and adjectives, governed by *of*, *cf*, *de*, *ex*.

3. By-tale, or example, *cf*, *gód-spell*, good-tale, or history, hence gospel.

4. Imperf. from *gellupan*, to happen.

5. From *wæsan*, to be; imperf. *wæs*, *wære*, *wæs*; Pl. *wæron*—*was*, *were*—usually called the imperfect of *to be* in our grammars!

6. Dat. sing. fem. from *seo theod*, the land or people, governed by *on*.

7. The indefinite article and pronoun, as explained in §. 6.

8. Imperf. of *hátan*, to have a name, be called—retained in old English "Bright is her hua, and Geraldine she hight"—*Lord Surrey*.

9. Gentive masc. of definite article of him—see §. 6.

10. Imperf. of *habban*, to have, ic *hæfde*, *hæfdest*, *hæfde*; Pl. *hæfdon*, *had*.

11. Acc. sing. neut. were *wif* fem.; the adj. would be in this case *ænlice*, indef. form, and the def. *ænlican*.

12. Past participle of *hátan*, used also in old English: "Among the rest a good old woman was hight Mother Hubbard"—*Spenser*.

14. From their first landing in the island down to the Norman conquest, that is to say, throughout the whole of the present period, the only nations the Anglo-Saxons came in contact with were the British and Irish Kelts from the beginning, the Romans at the time of their conversion, about 600 A.D., and the Northmen, who first appeared in the year 787. By none of these was the structure of the language affected in the slightest degree. How far they influenced its vocabulary remains to be seen. First Kelts.—The very faint impression made by these on the Anglo-Saxon has always been a matter of astonishment. So imperceptible, indeed, is it, that it was formerly supposed that the last comers simply rooted the aboriginal inhabitants out of the country. This solution, however, of the difficulty cannot be received without some reserve, though, were the truth known, perhaps it would be found that there was not a very great number left to be exterminated. The wars of the empire, in which the natives of Britain took such a distinguished part, now setting up one usurper and now another, the dreadful famine and pestilence of 412, the constant inroads of the Picts and Scots immediately preceding the invasion, and the horrors that attended it, must have considerably diminished the "*hominum infinita multitudo*" of which Cæsar speaks, and well nigh depopu-

13. Onginnan, engan, ongunnen.

14. Used indefinitely as in German, cf. the French *on* (on dit, etc.), contr. from *homme*.

15. Dat. from *se hearpere*, governed by *be*.

16. From *magan*, pres. *mæg*, *magon*; imperf. *mifhte*, *mihhton*: may, might, in the sense of *being able*.

17. From *wagian*, to wag, move; imperf. *ic wagode*, *wagodeast*, *wagode*.

18. It meant first a wild beast (cf. Greek *θηρ*) then *game*, and lastly a particular species of game. Shakspeare says: "Rats, and mice, and other small deer".

19. From *willan*: pres. *ic wille*, *wilt*, *wile*; imperf. *wolde*, *woldest*, *wolde*; plur. *woldon*; subj. imperf. *wolde*, *woldon*—will, would—implying determination, hence *future*.

20. Mann, gen. *manne*; plur. *menn* for *mannas*—man, men.

21. This should be *amundas*, like *wegas* in §. 8. The confusion of gen. sing. *es*, and plur. *as*, is a sure symptom of decay.

22. Cf. *withstand*, our *with*=cum is from *mid*.

23. Irreg. pres. *ic ga* and *gange*; imperf. *ic eode*; plur. *eodon*; part. past *gan* and *gangen* (Scotch *gang*, *gee*, *gaen*).

24. *Secgan*: imperf. *ic soegde* and *soede*; plur. *soedon*—say, said.

25. *Cwellan*, to quell or kill.

26. See §. 11.

27. Dat. sing., from *Hell*; gen. *helles*.

lated a land known to Diodorus Siculus as the *πολυανθρωπος νησος*. All this considered, the statement of Creasy, in his *English Constitution*, will not appear overdrawn, "that the Saxons almost entirely extirpated or expelled the *men* of British race, whom they found in the parts of this country which they conquered. . . . By reason of the union of the British females with the Saxon warriors, the British element was largely preserved in our nation". But it is probable that many of the male captives, and of those who submitted, were enslaved or employed as servants of the conquerors. It is remarkable that the nature of the thirty words, or thereabouts, known to have been retained from these, shows that, whether male or female, they were reduced to a complete state of thralldom. The following list is given by Latham from Garnett with their Welsh or British equivalents :

Welsh.	English.	Welsh.	English.	Welsh.	English.
basgawd,	basket.	crochan,	crockery.	matteg,	mattock.
berfa,	barrow.	crog,	crook.	mop,	mop.
botwm,	button.	cyln,	kiln.	rhaíl,	rail.
bran,	bran.	dantaeth,	dainty.	rhuwch,	rug.
clwt,	clout.	darn,	darn.	sawduriaw	solder.
		flaw,	flaw.	tacl,	tackle, &c.

15. Although Britain was for nearly 400 years an integral part of the empire, the traces the Romans left behind them were only a few geographical or military names, such as *Colonia* in Lincoln (*Lindi colonia*), and those ending in *caster*, *chester*, *cester* (*castra*), together with the single word *stroet*=*street*, which may be questioned, as we find it current in the other kindred tongues: Danish=*strøde*, Dutch=*straat*, German=*strasse*. These remains, such as they are, have been honoured with a distinct classification of their own, that of the Latin of the *first*, or *Keltic*, or *Román Period* (*Latham and others*). The remains of the Latin of the *second* or *Christian Period* are more important, without being very numerous. They are such Church words as were introduced by the Roman missionaries, and may be still recognized by the very English air they have now assumed. But see page 119.



<i>Saxon.</i>	<i>Latin.</i>	<i>Saxon.</i>	<i>Latin.</i>
mynster,	monasterium.	portic,	porticus.
profost,	propositus.	pall,	pallium.
cluster,	claustrum.	munuc,	monachus.
calic,	calix.	candel,	candela.
bisceop,	episcopus.	sanct,	sanctus.
mœsse,	missa.	pistel,	epistola, etc.

Cyrice (church), one writer observes, is not Latin, but from the Greek *κυριου οικος*, the house of the Lord, “a circumstance which points out the age of Saxon Christianity as antecedent to the influence of Rome. The Eastern Church assumed this name, but the Western always used the term *ecclesia* or congregation. *Church* and *Kirk* are relics of the ancient British Christianity”. A remarkable instance of the value and power of words, if the same term *Church* could possibly be made to serve the double purpose of pointing out the source of the Saxon, and of indicating the previous existence in the island of the British Christianity. It may be well, moreover, to observe that congregations were quite as common in the East as in the West, and that without them it were hard to understand the object of building these “houses of the Lord”. Again, *εκκλησια* is itself Greek, used in the New Testament and by the Greek Fathers in the double sense usually assigned to all these words, and notoriously to *Church*. “The *Church* is undoubtedly one”, etc.—*Archbishop Whately*. Besides, this Greek derivation of the word is doubtful, resting on the authority of Wal. Strabo (about 850): “ab ipsis autem Græcis *Kyrch* à *Kyrios*”, etc. The theory is that the Mæso-Goths, converted by Ulphilas, about 370, took it from the Greeks, and then handed it over to the other German tribes, including the Saxons, who brought it with them to Britain. But what these pagans wanted with such terms, for centuries before their conversion, is not explained. Admitting this view, however, what becomes of ‘the relics of the ancient British Christianity’? As the term has been considerably abused, and has occasioned much misconception, it was worth while examining its claims for distinction.

16. The country was infested by the Northmen from the year 787, down to the Norman invasion. The whole of East Anglia was yielded by Alfred to Godrum in 878, and a Danish dynasty ruled the land between the

years 1018 and 1042. All the northmen, whether Danes, Norwegians, or Icelanders, were of Scandinavian race, speaking, with little dialectic variety, the common Norse language. How far the Saxon was influenced by this, has been matter of dispute, some going so far as to call the language in its latter state Dano-Saxon, others maintaining that "it has not yet been clearly proved that any considerable part of the standard form of the English language is, in its origin Scandinavian, as distinguished from Germanic" (*Craik*). This is the view taken by Rask, himself a Dane, who asserts emphatically, that the Danes did not corrupt the Saxon, but that "it was the frequent expeditions of the Scandinavian nations into England, which, next to the introduction of Christianity, gave the first blow to the ancient language in the kingdoms of the north. The Danes continued their course of wars and victories the longest and most steadfastly; their language has consequently undergone the greatest changes, and from Canute's conquest of England, we may date the decline of the Icelandic (Norse) in Denmark" (*Preface*). The reason of this is very obvious. The Saxon was a cultivated tongue, reduced to a fixed state, and adapted to literary purposes, while the Norse was yet without grammar or dictionary, and so unfit for composition, that Canute's laws, and all public acts, were issued in Anglo-Saxon. The Danes that settled in the country were rapidly absorbed by the Saxon element, and civilization again got the better of the rude and ignorant barbarian: "Græcia capta ferum victorem cepit". Indeed the slight impression left by the Danes is a singular confirmation of the prophetic words of the Venerable Archbishop of Canterbury, Elpheg, martyred in the year 1012: "If ye (Danes) despise my counsel, know that ye shall perish, as did Sodom, and *shall not strike root in this land*". The words actually introduced by them may be described as *geographical*, *proper names* and *provincial*, rather than such as enter into the current speech.

Geographical: *by* substituted for *tun* (town) in the parts most occupied by them, as Newby for Newton, so Whitby, Grimsby, Derby, etc. A broad pronunciation of *ceaster*, *chester*, as Doncaster, Tadcaster, Lancaster. *Kirk* for *church*, in Scotland generally, and in

Kirkby, Kirkdale, Kirkham, Ormskirk, etc. These peculiarities, wherever found, are considered as indicative of a Danish occupation. They occur most frequently in Yorkshire and Lincoln, thence westward to the Isle of Man, and north to the Lowlands.

Proper Names: the patronymic ending *son*, substituted for the Saxon *-ing*, Edgarson for Edgaring. "All the numerous Ander-sons, Thomp-sons, John-sons, Nel-sons, etc., are more or less Danish, as opposed to Angle" (*Latham*).

Provincialisms: gar=make (*göra*, Swedish), lile=little (*lille*, Danish), greet=weep (*grata*, Icelandic), etc.

What other terms may have forced themselves into the general language, it is now impossible to point out, as they seem to have at once conformed to the Saxon mode of pronunciation, as opposed to the broader Danish. Thus the northern title *iarl* becomes *eorl* (earl), whether used in the original A.S. sense of *noble*, or in the Danish sense of *governor*, *ruler*, and the Danish King *Swayn*, is *Swen*, or *Swein*, in A.S. orthography.

17. The language we have been hitherto considering may be looked upon as a rude mingling of the dialects of the Saxons, Angles, Jutes or Goths, and Frisians. These appear to have very soon coalesced into one common speech, just as the tribes themselves united into one nationality. Its state before this union was effected we know nothing of, being only acquainted with it when it began to be used for literary purposes, which was about the year 600. King Ethelbert's laws, issued soon after his conversion to Christianity in 596, are, perhaps, the oldest extant specimens of A.S. From this time to the Norman conquest, we find a fixed and regular tongue, preserving itself almost without change for nearly 500 years; nor can we discover any clear traces of dialectic variety in the literary remains of the period, except two celebrated interlined MSS. of the Gospel, the *Rushworthian* and the *Cottonian*, supposed to be written in the Northumbrian dialect during the occupation of the country by the Danes. Hickes calls it the "Dialectus Dano-Saxonica", which is sufficiently correct as descriptive of its nature, but erroneous as used by him to

imply the general state of the language prevailing at the time. The peculiar features of this Northumbrian dialect show unmistakable symptoms of approaching decay. The grammatical *inflections* are often weakened or neglected, final consonants are dropped, as *habba* for *habban* (to have), *buta* for *butan* (without), *ilca* for *ilcan* (the same). The genders are confused, and the rules of construction much simplified. Many of these peculiarities may be safely ascribed to the Angles, who seated themselves in Northumberland, and who probably derived them from their Scandinavian neighbours previous to their arrival in England.

18. It is now certain that Turner was mistaken, when he asserted that A.S. versification "had really no other rule than the poet's ear", and elsewhere says it only differed from prose by a more stately diction and pomp of words; for Rask has shown that it has, in common with the other kindred tongues, especially Icelandic, a fixed structure, the most striking feature of which is *alliteration*, or head-rhyme, just as the syllabic quantity may be said to distinguish the classic, and end-rhyme combined with accent, the modern system. Accent, however, is quite as essential to A.S. verse as it is to English, the alliteration itself being, in fact, regulated by it. The lines are always arranged in couplets, grouped not according to sense, but to the alliteration, which requires that two *accented syllables* in the first, and one in the second line, begin with the *same* letter if a consonant, with a *different*, if possible, when a vowel. These three initial letters are called *rhyming-letters*, the third, standing in the second line, being the *chief letter*, according to which the two of the previous verse must be regulated. These are, therefore, called *sub-letters*. In the couplet there should not be more than three *accented syllables* beginning with this letter, and the *chief-letter* must begin the first *accented* syllable or word of the second line. Finally, in *very short* verse, and especially when the *rhyming letters* are double, *sc*, *st*, *sw*, *dr*, *gr*, etc., there need be but *one sub-letter*. This is the doctrine of alliteration, or head-rhyme, invariably observed in A.S. poetry, as laid down by Rask. He gives the following example from Beowulf, 1108:—

1	{ In Caines cýnne	In Cain's kin
	{ þone cweal gewrœc	The murder avenged
2	{ Ece drihten,	The Eternal Lord,
	{ þoes þe he Abel slóg :	Because he slew Abel :
3	{ Ne ge féah he þære fœhðe,	He got no joy from his hatred,
	{ Ac he hine fœor forwrœc,	But He, the Creator, drove him
4	{ Métoð for þý máne	For that misdeed,
	{ Máncynne fram.	Far from the human race.

In couplet 1 the rhyming letter is *c*, found twice in the first and once in the second line. It is arranged not according to the sense, but to the laws of alliteration. In 2 there are only two rhyming vowels, which, according to rule, are different, *e* and *a*. None of the words preceding *Abel* are *accented*, as required; *f* is the rhyming letter in 3, where the *f* of *ge-féah* is the first letter of the *accented* syllable, *ge* being an unaccented prefix. The fourth *f* (in *forwrœc*) begins an unaccented syllable; *for* is, therefore, no violation of the law, which requires that not more than *three accented syllables* begin with the rhyming letter. In 4 the *m* is quite regular.

19. Besides this, there are evident traces of *end* or *final-rhyme*, which Rask thinks was employed by the northerns from a very remote period, though there is only one A.S. poem extant, known as the "rhyming poem", in which it is used throughout. In Latin poetry it is employed very freely, especially by St. Aldhelm, the first Saxon who wrote Latin verse. He was educated at Malmesbury, by Maildulf, an Irishman, under whom "he became thoroughly versed in Latin and Greek"—*Turner*. From this and other circumstances it is highly probable that the A.S. adopted end-rhyme from the Irish, who are believed to be the first that introduced the practice into Latin poetry. At least, it is certain that the most ancient extant specimens of Latin rhyme are the compositions of Irishmen and their disciples. A proof of this is the very old hymn of St. Fechin, who flourished about 570 :—

De hinc fuit monachorum  
Dux et Pater tercentorum  
Quos instruxit lege morum  
Murus contra vitia.—Amen.

## SPECIMENS.

20. "Saxon literature", Dr. Lingard writes, "comprised only a few national poems and books of devotion: the treasures of history and science were still locked up in the obscurity of a learned tongue" (I. IV.). The general literary language, such as we are acquainted with, is supposed to be southern or Saxon, rather than northern or Angle. The political supremacy of Wessex, and the influence of Alfred, a native of Berkshire, may have caused it to become the ruling speech, and the standard literary model, just as the writings of Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch elevated the local *Tuscan* dialect into the classic *Italian*. Some have even asserted that all works, in whatever form originally composed, were subsequently conformed to the genius of the speech rendered classic by Alfred. This would certainly account for the few traces of local peculiarities deviating from those of Wessex in the literary remains which have reached us. A few specimens selected from writers of various periods will be sufficient to show the great uniformity of the language throughout.

## CÆDMON, DIED ABOUT 680.

The compositions, attributed to this first and greatest of A.S. poets, would fill altogether a book about the size of half *Paradise Lost*. The greater portion of them are, unquestionably, spurious. Here is a fragment of his found in *Bede*, IV. 24, universally allowed to be genuine:—

nu we sceolon herigean  
heofon-rices weard,  
metodes mihte  
and his mód-geþanc  
weorc wuldor-fædor,  
swa he wundra gehwæs  
éce drihten  
ord onstealde.  
He ærest scóp  
eorðan bearnum  
heofon tó hrófe  
hálig scippend  
þá middangeard  
modcynnes weard,

now we shall praise  
heaven-kingdom's guard  
the Creator's might  
and his mind-thought  
work's glory-father  
how he of wonders  
eternal Lord  
the beginning formed.  
He first shaped  
the earth for the children (of men)  
heaven as a roof  
the holy Creator  
then the mid-world  
mankind's guard

éce drihten  
æfter teóde,  
frum foldan  
freá ælmihtig.

eternal Lord  
afterwards made  
for men the earth  
Lord Almighty.

### ALFRED. 850-900

(From the Preface to his version of St. Gregory's Pastoral, explaining the object of such versions generally).

Ic wundrode swidhe þæra godera witenas þe geo wæron  
*I wondered much of the good wise-men that long ago were*  
geond Angelcyn and ra béc befullan ealle geleornod hæfdon  
*through (in) England and the books fully all learned had*  
þæt hira þa nanne dæl noldon on hira agen geþeode  
*that of-them no part not-would into their own native speech*  
wenden, ac ic þa sona eft me sylfum andwyrde ac cwæð,  
*turn, but I then soon after to-myself answered and said,*  
hí ne wendon þæt æfre men sceoldon swa recelease wurðan  
*they (did) not think that ever men should so careless become*  
ac seo lar swa ðofeallan.....For þi me pingð betere gif  
*and the lore so fall-off.....Wherefore me thinks better if*  
geow swa þincð þæt we eac some béc þa þemed beþyrfysta  
*you so think that we also some books that seem most-needed*  
syn eallum mannum to witanne þæt we þa on þæt  
*to all men to understand that we them into that*  
geþeode wendon þe we ealle ge-cnawan mægen, and ge-don swa  
*speech turn that we all know may, and cause, as*  
we swiðe eaðe magon mid Godes fultume þæt eall seo geoguð  
*we very easily may with God's help, that all the youth*  
þe nu is on Angel-cynne freora manna þara þe þa spedra  
*that now is in England of-free men of those that the wealth*  
hæbben, þæt hi þam befeollan mægen syn to leornunge  
*have that they themselves support, may into learning*  
oðfaeste þa hwile þe hi nanre oðre note ne mægen, oð  
*be-put the while that they to no other things not may, till*  
fyrst þe hí wel cunnen Englise geurit arædan.  
*first that they well can English writing read.*

### ÆLFRIC, DIED 1006

(De Veteri Testamento).

ða næfde he nan setl hwær he sittan mihte, forðan ðe nan  
*Then not-had he no seat where he sit might, for that no*

heofon nolde hine aberan, ne nan rice næs þe his  
*heaven not-would him bear, nor no kingdom not-was that his*  
 mihte beon ongean Godes willan þe geworhte ealle ðinc, etc.  
*might be against God's will that wrought all things, etc.*

### SAXON CHRONICLE FOR THE YEAR 1087

(Death of William the Conqueror).

He swealt on Normandige on þone næxtan dæg æfter Nativitas  
*He died in Normandy on the next day after the Nativity*  
 Sce Marie; and man begyrgede hine on Cathum æt Sce Stephanes  
*of St. Mary; and man buried him in Caen at St. Stephen's*  
 mynstere..... Gif hwa gewilniged to gewitane hu gedon man he  
*minster.....If who wish to know how to-do man he*  
 was, oððe hwilcne wurðscipe he hæfde, oððe hu fela lande  
*was, or what worship he had, or of-how many lands*  
 he wære hlaford, þonne wille we of him awritan swa swa we hine  
*he were lord, then will we of him write so as we him*  
 ageaton: we him onlocodan, and oððre hwile on his hirede  
*knew: we him on-looked, and other while in his hirede*  
 wunedon.  
*dwelt.*

This portion of the Saxon chronicle (1034–1087) has been attributed to Wulfstan, Bishop of Worcester, who was born in 1007, and died in 1095. If to these few names we add those of another, Wulfstan, Archbishop of York (1003–1023), author of some pastorals and sermons; Cynewulf, Bishop of Winchester; the Abbot Alfric, and some national songs by unknown writers, we shall have well-nigh exhausted the list of names that occur in A.S. literature. Ælfric, the Archbishop, translated the first seven books of the Bible into very simple Saxon, carefully avoiding the use of all obscure words, in order, as he himself tells us, to be understood by the most illiterate, and to render the Scriptures familiar to all classes, anticipating Wickliff by, at least, 470 years. Other portions of it, especially the N.T., had been translated much earlier. “Altogether, considering the general state of Western Europe in the middle ages, the literature of our A.S. forefathers may be regarded as a creditable feature of our national history, and as something of which we might



justly be proud, if we did not allow ourselves to remain in such ignorance of it"—*Chambers's Cyclopædia*.

#### QUESTIONS.

1. What are the natural stages of the English language? How may they be designated? Explain their nature. How is the middle period subdivided? Give the names and dates of these five periods.

2. What importance do you attach to a slight knowledge of the language during the first period? How far does the alphabet differ from the Latin? It possessed two peculiar letters not now used. Why is this to be regretted?

3. There is both *reason* and *authority* for believing that the A.S. borrowed this alphabet from the Irish, rather than the Irish from them.

4. What was the state of the orthography? How was the accent employed?

5. Describe the general nature of the grammar. What are *notional* and *relational* words?

6. How many definite articles? These were used in a variety of ways. Origin of our article *the*?

7. How was gender determined? How many orders of declension? In the first, how many actual inflexions?

8. In the second, which form is most important to us? Why?

9. The adjective had two forms? How used? How was the definite form declined? The indefinite?

10. The degrees of comparison were double? The difference between *swiflor* and *swiftra*?

11. Which of the personal pronouns possessed a dual form? What case is *him*? Genitive of *hit*? Origin of the words *these*, *those*?

12. There is a marked difference between the state of the nouns and verbs? How many possible changes is an A.S. verb liable to? How many of these are retained in the English verb? What is meant by a *weak* and a *strong* conjugation? Distinguish an irregular from a *strong* verb in *English*.

14. The number and *nature* of Keltic words introduced at this period? What is the historical importance of these words?

15. Two classes of Latin words? The word *church* has given occasion to a theory which does not seem tenable?

16. To what race did the Northmen belong? What does Rask say about their influence on the A.S. language? What sort of words did they introduce? Why is it difficult to say whether a word is Danish or Saxon in its origin?

17. There are proofs of the existence of *one dialect* at this period. What is its nature?

18. The chief characteristic of A.S. versification? What were its laws? Show that *accent* was essential?

19. To what extent was *end-rhyme* employed? Its probable origin?

20. Mention the principal names that occur in A.S. literature. Account for the great uniformity of the written language throughout this period.

### SECTION III.

(1066-1200).

Semi-Saxon Period—One of Dissolution—Time when Decay first set in—its Cause—Mistaken Views on this Subject—Grammar Broken, or Ungrammatical Saxon—Vocabulary—Specimens.

1. The middle, or transition state of the language may be said, roughly, to extend from the arrival of the Normans to the reign of Henry VI., or to lie between the years 1066 and 1450. Before this epoch, we have seen that the language was pure Anglo-Saxon—after it we shall see that it is good modern English. But as, to get from the former to the latter, it was necessary first to break down, and then to build up again, so there are two natural subdivisions of the transition period, one of *dissolution*, and one of *reconstruction*. The first of these embraces all the time during which the old language was undergoing a process of “disorganization and decay, without exhibiting any symptoms which the most intelligent observer could, at the time, have interpreted as presaging a return to completeness and consistency—a period of confusion, alike perplexing to those who then used the tongue, and to those who now endeavour to trace its vicissitudes”—*Spalding*. It is usually called the *Semi-Saxon* period, and various dates have been assigned for its actual duration. We have made it extend over a space of 150 years, from 1066 to 1200, which falls short of what is generally allowed to it by about half a century. Sir F. Madden closes it in 1230, Craik protracts it to 1250, and others still further. But as, after Layamon, we have no extant Saxon in any shape, and his writings are universally referred to about 1200, the Semi-Saxon state of the language seems, very naturally, to end at this time.

2. Did it begin in 1066, or, in other words, were the first symptoms of corruption coincident with the arrival of the Normans? So far as the *written* language is concerned, the answer must be *no*. Very good A.S. was written for at least fifty years after that event. Wulfstan, Bishop of Worcester, died in 1095, and his works are grammatically correct. Such are the portions of the *Saxon Chronicle* attributed to him, an extract from which, for the year 1087, may be seen amongst the specimens of the last section. But with the spoken language the case was very different. Craik has gone far to show that there existed, much earlier than is commonly supposed, a colloquial form of speech, side by side with the written, and resembling the more recent language in its general structure. "The same thing seems to have taken place as in France, and other continental countries, when the Latin first became corrupted into the *Romana Rustica*; the former long continued to be the language of writing, and probably even of the educated classes in oral communication, while the latter was the popular speech, from which it gradually rose to be the dialect first of popular, then of all literature. So in this country there was probably in use a sort of English, or broken Saxon, even in the Saxon times; and the two forms of the language, the regular and the irregular, the learned and the vulgar, the old and the new, the mother and the daughter, seem to have maintained a rivalry for, perhaps, a century or two, till the rude vigour, the rough and ready character of the one prevailed, in a time of much ignorance and general convulsion and change, over the refinement and comparative difficulty of the other" (I. 205). The earliest extant specimen of such a popular form of speech is the *Song of Canute*, recorded by the Monk of Ely, about 1166, 150 years after it was supposed to have been composed:—

"Merie sungen the muneches binnen Ely,	"Merrily sung the monks within Ely,
Tha Cnut Ching rew there by :	When that Cnut King rowed thereby :
Roweth, cnihtes, noer the land, And here we thes muneches saeng".	Row, knights, near the land, And hear we these monks sing".

But these verses have such a very modern air, that although

Craik thinks the words cannot be much altered from the time they were sung, it is probable that they were considerably modified in more recent MSS. from the time they were reported.

3. However, if such a popular dialect did exist so early as is here implied, it will go far to account for the cause of the general decay of the language, about which so many theories have been started. It will be sufficient to mention three of these. They may be termed, for brevity sake, the

- (a) Norman,
- (b) Anti-Norman,
- (c) Middle Course.

(a) According to the Norman view of the case, the change was due solely to the Conquest. That event introduced the French language, by the direct action of which upon the A.S., the corruption was brought about, which resulted in modern English. This theory may be looked upon as now out of date, and safely set aside. We shall see that the French tongue never at any time affected the *structure* of the language, and had no perceptible influence of any sort on it during the present period, the very time when the dissolution was accomplished. (b) The Anti-Normans run into the opposite extreme, and assert that the great event just alluded to had nothing to do with the decay. In fact, had the Normans never made their appearance, or had Harold triumphed at Hastings, the language would have lost its grammatical inflexions all the same, and would have become what it now substantially is. The only difference would have been in the vocabulary, which would have presented a more homogeneous character, possessing fewer Latin and French words. Here there is a great deal of truth, perhaps a little exaggeration. It does seem going too far to deny all connection between the dissolution of the language and the Norman Conquest. Surely the one must have hastened the other, and acted indirectly upon the A.S. in a variety of ways. Consequently it will be safer to adopt the *middle course*, (c), which maintains, 1st, that the general corruption of the language took place, *independently* of the Norman Conquest, in accordance with a tendency inherent in all *synthetic* tongues, gradually to lose their com-

plex grammatical system, and so become, to a greater or less extent, analytical; 2nd, that so far as the A.S. is concerned, this tendency was precipitated by the Conquest, and partly directed, or influenced, by contact with the French language.

4. An *analytic* form of speech is the reverse of the *synthetic*. It expresses by separate words, or particles, those relations of ideas to ideas, which we have seen conveyed by a change or modification of the *notional* words in the latter. A pure analytic language will possess no grammatical inflexions; a pure synthetic, no *relational* words. An example of each system will make this clear. The Chinese is a perfect instance of the one, the American tongues generally of the other. In Chinese the slightest shade of meaning requires at once a separate word. Thus *day*=*je*, but *daily*=*je yung*=day use—i.e., what is used or needed every day. In Aztec or Mexican, not only are ideas and their relations, but even whole idioms, thrown into one word by a sort of agglutination, which to us seems quite incomprehensible. The word *notlazomahuizteopixcatzin* is explained to mean my-beloved-honoured-revered-priestly-father. When taken to pieces, we find it made up of the following component parts: *no*=my+*tlazotli*=beloved+*mahuiztic*=honored+*teopixqui* (from *Teotl*=God, and *pia*=to keep or guard)=priestly+*tatli*=father+*tzin*=a reverential termination (Hervas, *Idea dell' Universo*, XVIII.) The great majority of known languages lies between these two extremes, that is to say, they are only, to a certain extent, either synthetic or analytic. Much has been written on the rival claims of these systems as to priority in point of time. Was speech originally void of grammar, or gifted from the first with a highly complicated structure? There does appear to be a universal law pervading all speech, in virtue of which it ever tends to change from one state to the other with equal readiness, from the simple and unartificial to the compound, and back again, ever putting together and taking asunder. The farther back we go, the more developed and elaborate do we find the inflexion state of most languages. It has thence been, perhaps too hastily concluded, that this was

their original condition. It may be that we do not go back far enough, and that, could we trace them to their first state, we would find that this very inflexional system, however complex it may now appear, developed itself gradually out of a simple beginning, in accordance with certain hidden laws of euphony and harmony. Indeed, the acquisition, or growth of inflection, so far from being "probably unknown as an actual phenomenon" (*Craik*), is demonstrated by the history of most languages, which evidently show a gradual progress from rude beginnings to a more perfect state. Little *significant* words were at first tacked on loosely to the end of roots, and then blended so with them, as in course of time to lose all independent meaning. The ending *ivus*, in Latin, is a corruption of *vis*, cf. *dat-ivus*=*dandi vis*. Hence its universal *active* power. The English language, were it not fixed by *writing* (an influence not brought to bear on speech in its earlier stages), would very rapidly run into a synthetic state, which, when it came to be reduced to writing, would be found of a most intricate nature. We should have, by *analogy* from *don't*, *won't*, *can't*, *shan't*; such forms as *ain't*=ought not, *maín't*=must not, *haín't*=have not. Here are already the germs of, perhaps, three negative conjugations in *ó*, *á*, and *ai*. Then the pronouns would quickly blend with the verb, as, in fact, they now do in speaking, developing regular tense-endings, such as: *cham*=I am; *chav*=I have; *thart*=thou art; *thast*=thou hast; *hes*=he is; *has*=he has, etc., in the Barony of Forth dialect. In this very way we know that the Indo-European verb was formed. In a word, the method pursued in the modern science of philology is based upon the supposition that language was originally analytic, consisting of roots only, chiefly monosyllabic, and gradually developing itself on synthetic principles, with a general tendency to fall back again into its primitive state.

5. A.S. formed no exception to the universal rule. A glance at the state of its grammar is sufficient to convince us that, at the time it began to be cultivated, it had already lost a great deal of its synthetic character. This is confirmed by reference to the Mæso-Gothic, Norse, and other kindred tongues, where we find a multiplicity of inflexions,

especially verbal, which must have existed in the Saxon at some remote period, but which had already disappeared when the language began to be reduced to a written form. Even this written form was not strictly adhered to in the Dano-Saxon, or Northumbrian dialect, explained in the last section. This again was still further disregarded in the current popular speech long before it ceased to be employed in literature. But it has been shown that, on account of some mysterious law of consistency or analogy, all speech tends to work out within itself, and independently of all external influence, any tendency may have once set in, either towards composition, if simple, or towards disorganization, if complex. We may, therefore, safely conclude, that as the bent of the A.S., long previous to the arrival of the Normans, was downwards towards decomposition, it would have developed this inclination to its legitimate consequences, and resulted in a form of speech *essentially* the same as the present English, independently of the Norman Conquest.

6. So far, then, theory (*b*) is right. But it is in vain to deny that the Invasion had anything to do with the rapid breaking up of the Saxon, which was apparent very soon after that event. Writing is, avowedly, that which exercises the most powerful influence on language in a *conservative* sense. It will stay a downward, or arrest an upward tendency. It will preserve the Greek, in a highly inflexional state, throughout ages of social and political convulsion. It will, on the other hand, prevent the Chinese from ever assuming a composite character. We believe that the art of writing was known to the Chinese at a period so very remote, that the language was still in its primitive simple condition, and that it was their literature which retained it from time immemorial in that state, stagnant, so to say, and petrified, like every thing else connected with that remarkable people. The Normans virtually put an end to the Saxon literature. The only native remains we possess, for the two hundred years after their arrival, are the latter portions of the *Saxon Chronicle*, and Layamon's *Brute*. They persecuted and trampled upon the national speech in every possible way. It was ignored by the aristocracy,

excluded from all polite society, shut out even from the High Church. Wulfstan, Bishop of Worcester, was deposed, because he was "a superannuated English idiot, who could not speak French"—*Matt. Paris*. The laws were administered in French. In the King's court the president and chief assessors were Normans. "Ipsum etiam idioma tantum abhorrebant, quod leges terræ, statutaque Anglorum regum lingua Gallica tractarentur, et pueris etiam in scholis principia literarum grammatica Gallice et non Anglice traderentur"—*Ingulf*, 71, 88. The consequent neglect into which A.S. fell, was, of itself, sufficient not only to hasten its decay, but even to cause it to disappear altogether in course of time, had that continued.

7. One would suppose that these potent influences, external and internal, were quite sufficient to account for the corruption. And, indeed, such was the common belief, until Mr. Guest, in his *English Rhythms*, discovered another, which is worth considering. He tells us that "the language of our earlier literature fell at last a victim not to the Norman Conquest, for it survived that event at least a century; not to the foreign jargon, which the weak but well-meaning Edward (the Confessor) first brought into the country, for French did not mix with our language till the days of Chaucer; it fell from the same deep and mighty influences which swept every living language from the literature of Europe. When the South regained its ascendancy, and Rome once more seized the wealth of vassal provinces, its favourite priests had neither the knowledge requisite to understand, nor tastes fitted to enjoy, the literature of the countries into which they were promoted. The road to their favour and their patronage lay elsewhere; and the monk, giving up his mother tongue as worthless, began to pride himself only upon his Latinity. The legends of his patron saint he Latinized; the story of his monastery he Latinized; in Latin he wrote history; in Latin he wrote satires and romances. Amid these labours he had little time to study the niceties of A.S. grammar; and the Homilies, the English Scriptures, Cædmon's Paraphrase, the national songs, the magnificent Iudith, and other treasures of native genius, must soon have lain on the shelves of his



cloister as little read, or, if read, almost as little understood, as if they had been written in a foreign tongue. When he addressed himself to the unlearned, noble or ignoble, he used the vulgar dialect of his shire, with its idioms, which the written dialect had probably rejected as wanting in precision, and with its corrupt pronunciation, which alone would require new forms of grammar". These are the returns made to men, without whom no English would be, perhaps, spoken at the present day, who alone cultivated the language, and endeavoured to keep it together as long as possible, toiling night and day at their dreary and thankless task, who are the only links that connect the present with the past here as in all other things. They first taught the Saxons the use of letters, and created their literature, thus preserving the language in a state which enabled it to come out with comparative success from its severe struggle for ascendancy with its Norman rival. Assuredly, had not the A.S. been converted, and acquired sufficient knowledge to reduce their tongue to a written form, it would have arrived at such a stage of decomposition at the time of the invasion, as would have caused it to fare no better, in face of a cultivated language, than did the Dane, the Frankish, and Longobard, under similar circumstances (see section IV. §. 4).

8. The main difference between the grammar of this period and the previous, has already been partly explained. It may be generally described as *broken, ungrammatical*, or simply *bad* Saxon, as we now say *bad grammar*. If that was inflected, this is so to a less degree. The inflexions were then fixed and regulated by certain laws; they are now vague, undetermined, arbitrary, their greater or less consistency depending upon the amount of knowledge possessed by the individual writer. Hence the structure of one work will vary from that of another, though contemporary, or almost so, agreeing, however, in the chief features. Such is the relation the only two extant compilations of the time bear to each other. These are, as already stated, the remaining portions of the Saxon Chronicle, 1100–1154, and Layamon's translation, or rather amplified imitation of Wace's *Brute*, 1200. Without entering into a minute ana-

lysis of the special niceties that distinguished the latter from the former, it may be sufficient to state, in a general way, that Layamon's language is considerably more corrupt than that of the *Chronicle*, but not more so, if so much, than would be warranted by the difference of time. In contrasting this broken state of the speech with the preceding, it is obvious that the greatest change will be perceptible in the noun and adjective, the least in the verb. The verb could only lose thirteen inflexions. It only actually lost one of these, the gerund in *-nne*, or *-ne*, or rather confounded it with the present participle *-nde=ing*; and with the infinitive, *tó lufigenne* becoming *tó lufian*. Some of the other terminations, however, were considerably *weakened*, by the substitution of *e* for *a*, *en* for *on*, and by the occasional omission of some final letters. We have *ic macod*, and *ic maked*, for *ic macode*; *finden* for *findan*, *penc* for *pence*, *segen* for *segan*, etc.

9. In the *nouns*, besides a general disregard for the proper case-endings, there is a decided preference shown for the masculine declension in *es*, gen. sing., and *as*, nom. plur., explained in the last section. According to this are declined nouns of both orders and of all genders, and even here the plur. *as* is softened into *es*, and the dative plur. in *-um* is constantly ignored. So we find *endes* for both *endas* and *endum*, *dacies* for *dæges*, *dægas*, *dægum*. The adoption of this form seems to have been due to its greater facility, rather than to any *indirect* action of the French language, requiring the Saxon to accommodate its grammar to the genius of the foreign words that began now to work their way into it. In confirmation of this latter view, Dr. Trench, in his *English Past and Present*, cites an otherwise instructive passage from J. Grimm: "When the English language was inundated by a vast influx of French words, few, if any, French forms were received into its grammar; but the Saxon forms soon dropped away, because they did not suit the new roots; and the genius of the language, from having to deal with the newly-imported words in a rude state, was induced to neglect the inflexions of the native ones. This, for instance, led to the introduction of the *s* as the universal termination of all plural nouns, which

agreed with the usage of the French language, and was not alien from that of the Saxon, but was merely an extension of the termination of the ancient masculine to other classes of nouns". Where it should be observed that this practice was followed long before any such *inundation* of French words as is here alluded to had yet set in. It was not, therefore, adopted to meet the exigencies of that language, which was probably unknown to, certainly not countenanced by, the few natives who still adhered to the national idiom. So that the law of all composite languages, laid down by Trench himself, is not violated in this instance. "However composite they may be, yet they are only so in regard of their words. There may be a medley in respect of these, some coming from one quarter, some from another; but there is never a *mixture* of *ungrammatical* forms and inflexions. One or other language *entirely* predominates here, and everything has to conform and subordinate itself to the laws of this ruling and ascendant language. The A.S. is the ruling language in our present English; while that has thought good to drop its genders, even so the French substantives which came among us, must also leave theirs behind them, as in like manner the verbs must renounce their own conjugations, and adapt themselves to ours. 'Coeunt quidem paullatim in novum corpus peregrina vocabula, sed grammatica linguarum, unde petitæ sunt, ratio perit'—*W. Schlegel*, p. 25-26".

10. With regard to the adjectives, all distinction was at once lost between the *definite* and the *indefinite* form. *The* good man, and *a* good man, would both be *þe gód man*, *án gód man*, instead of *se góða man*, *án gód man*. Their declensions were also confounded in much the same way as were those of the nouns, often disappearing altogether.

Gender, hitherto regulated according to *termination*, but always difficult and uncertain, could no longer be adhered to when the endings began to get confused. The modern principle, therefore, began to be adopted, of following nature—a very simple and obvious remedy, commended by truth and common sense.

The declinable article *þæt*, *se*, *seó* was quite superfluous

by the side of the indeclinable *þe*=the, often used instead of it, even by the best A.S. writers.

The most striking change in the pronouns is the substitution of the dative *him* for the accusative *hine*. The modern *him* is a dative form, with an acc., and occasionally a dat. force: give him, etc.

The proper government of prepositions is not attended to: *mid eðgan* for *mid eðgum*, as if a Roman were to write *cum oculi*, instead of *cum oculis*.

These, and whatever further changes occurred, may be rendered more intelligible by the illustrative specimens presently to be given.

11. Throughout this period the vocabulary remained *purely Saxon*, so far as the written language was concerned. Scarcely any Roman words are to be met with in the Saxon Chronicle. A curious instance, it has been observed, is the word '*peace*', instead of the A.S. *frip* from *freó*=free. The peace that was the result of *freódom*, and suggestive of it, could, indeed, exist no longer for the disheartened and down-trodden native. The death-like calm that succeeded the ruthless Norman devastations, was sufficiently well expressed, thought the simple Saxon chronicler, by one of their own weak, meaningless terms. Layamon's great work consists, according as it is arranged, of either about 14,000 long verses, or 32,000 short, yet contains not quite *fifty* French words in the older text, as left by him. There is a more recent MS. of the poem, referred to the reign of Henry III., perhaps about 1250, in which *thirty* of these are retained, and upwards of *forty* others introduced, making altogether about *seventy*, which, at an average of eight words to each long line, gives a proportion of one to 1600.

#### SPECIMENS.

12. In order to convey to the eye, and through it to the mind, an idea of the difference between A.S. and Semi-Saxon, the two following illustrative specimens are proposed. In No. I., a piece of the S. Chr., we have endeavoured, with the help of Rask and Spalding's valuable notes, to restore to the pure standard, as it would have been written in the days of Alfred or of Ælfric. In No. II.,

by way of further illustration for the classical student, a literal Latin version of the same piece is given, *grammatically correct*. Then a presumed *Semi-Latin* version, which will help to show how Latin gradually merged into the modern vernacular. Some idea may thus be formed of the manner synthetic languages generally tend to lose their grammatical inflexions, and so become analytic. The wonderful influence that a mere shifting back of the *accent* has in producing this result, by *necessarily weakening* strong case and verbal endings, is here put in a striking manner. Take the word *pervenérunt*, and transfer the accent one syllable back; it becomes difficult at once to pronounce the final *t*, and the word is probably *pervénerun* at first, and then (the *liquid n* being dropped, for want of support) *pervénero*, or, as now written, *pervénnero*. That this tendency to throw back the accent, with similar results, existed even in classic times, has been abundantly shown by Donaldson in *Varro-nianus*, *omnibus modis*=*omnímodis*=*omnímode*, *amavérunt*=*amárunt*, etc.

## I.—SAXON CHRONICLE, A.D. 1137.

Written some time after Stephen's death, 1154, describing the miseries inflicted by the Norman nobles on the natives during his reign.\*

- (a) Hí swencton þá wreccan menn þæs landes mid castel-  
 (b) Hí swencten the wreccen men of-the-land mid castel-  
 (c) They harrassed the wretched men of the land with castle-  
 (a) weorcum. Þa þá castelas wæron gemacod þá fyldon  
 (b) weorces. Tha the castles waren maked thá fylden  
 (c) works. When the castles were made, then filled  
 (a) hí (hí) mid yfelum mannum. Þa namon hí þá  
 (b) hí mid yvele men. Tha namen hí thá  
 (c) they (them) with evil men. Then took they the  
 (a) menn þá hí wéndon þæt ænig gód hæfdon bátwá  
 (b) men the hí wenden thæt ani gód hefden báthe  
 (c) men that they thought that any goods had, both  
 (a) nihtes and dages. Man hengon up bý þám fótum,  
 (b) be nihtes and be dæies. Me hinged up bi the fét,  
 (c) by night and by day. Men (they) hanged up by the feet,  
 (a) and smucon heom mid fúlum smeoce: man dyde gecnottede  
 (b) and smoked heom mid fúl smoke: me dide cnotted  
 (c) and smoked them with foul smoke: men did knotted

\* (a)=Anglo-Saxon and Latin. (b)=Semi-Saxon and Semi-Latin.  
 (c)=Modern English and Italian.

- (a) strengas abútan beora heafod, and wriðe oð hit eode to  
 (b) strenges abútan here hoæved, and writen to-that it goede to  
 (c) strings about their head, and twisted until it went to  
 (a) þám brægenum.  
 (b) the hørnes.  
 (c) the brains.

## II.—THE SAME IN LATIN, SEMI-LATIN, AND ITALIAN.

- (a) Ipsi affixerunt illos miserandos homines illius terræ cum  
 (b) Ipsi affixeron illi miserandi homini de illa terra cum  
 (c) Essi affissero quelli miserandi uomini della terra con  
 (a) castellis munitis. Quando illa castella fuerunt facta, tum  
 (b) castelli muniti. Quando illi castelli fúeron facti, ad illa hora  
 (c) castelli muniti. Quando quei castelli furono fatti, allora  
 (a) impleverunt illa ipsi (cum) malis hominibus. Tum  
 (b) impleveron illi issi cum mali homini. Ad-la hora  
 (c) empiro -li essi cor mali uomini. Allora  
 (a) prehenderunt ipsi illos homines quos ipsi existimaverunt qui  
 (b) prehènderon issi illi homini qui issi istimáveron qui  
 (c) presero essi quegli uomini che essi stimarono che  
 (a) aliqua bona haberent et noctu et die. Suspenderunt  
 (b) aliqui boni haberen et de nocte et de die. Suspenderon  
 (c) alcuní beni avessero e di notte e di di. Sospesero  
 (a) pedibus et fumigaverunt illos cum immundo fumo. Alii  
 (b) per pedes et fumigáveron illi cum immundo fumo. Alteri  
 (c) pei piedi ed affumicarón- li con immondo fumo. Altri  
 (a) fecerunt nodatas chordas circa illorum capita, et contorserunt  
 (b) féceron nodate chorde circa illoru capiti, et contorseron  
 (c) fecero nodate corde circa i loro capi, e contorsero  
 (a) donec illæ pervenerunt ad cerebrum.  
 (b) ad-finemqui ille perveneron ad cerebro.  
 (c) finchè quelle pervennero al cervello.

By way of further illustration, and to show that the Semi-Latin here assumed is not without precedent, a curious scrap is added of what Cantú calls "a primordii della lingua Italiana". It contains some directions of a chemist referred to the year 770, when the language was in a state of disorganization, but not to the same extent as is presumed in our specimen.

"Cuse ipsas pelles; laxa dissicare, batte lamina, et post illa battuta, per martellum adequatur, tam de latum quam de longum: scaldato illo in foco, batte et tene illud cum tanalea ferrea; sed tornatur de intro in foras: dextende

eum; ibi scalda; pone ad battere; settecientur; modicum laxa stare; et lixa illud...imple carbonibus, et decoque... josu ligna, et sus carbones—et si una long fuerit vel curta, per martellum adequatur”—*Schiarimenti e noti*, iv.

One great advantage of our early English remains is, that they enable us to trace the progress of the language, step by step, from the remotest times, and render such a work as the present possible, which, for want of a similar literature, the Italians and French could scarcely attempt successfully.

13. An extract from Layamon will help to show how very much the language had fallen off since the last specimen from the Sax. Chr. He tells us, in the beginning of his poem, that he was a priest of Ernley, on the Severn, and as he was a native of Worcestershire, it is supposed that he used the dialect of the West of England. It is, “at any rate, clearly southern as opposed to northern, and western as opposed to eastern”—*Craik—Outlines*. Much has been written upon the *nunnation*, or redundant use of *n*, and other peculiarities of this dialect, such as the plural in *th*, *we loveth*, *u* for *i*, as *dude*=*dide*, etc. He “seems to have halted between two languages, the written and the spoken. Now, he gives us what appears to be the old English dialect of the west; and, a few sentences farther, we find ourselves entangled in all the peculiarities of the A.S.”—*Engl. Rhythms*, II. In truth, not over much importance can be attached to his language, beyond what was stated above. Neither it nor any of the literature of these times was much read or even generally known outside the monasteries where it was composed. It could not have exercised the slightest influence on that which followed, for it never could be considered a correct standard worthy to be imitated by subsequent writers. Literature it was not at all: in the strict sense of the word as we take it to be, truth expressed in *beautiful and elegant* language. Such could not exist at a time when the means of creating the latter of these ingredients were wanting. This specimen from the account of the battle of Bath, has been also put into A.S. like the foregoing.

## LATAMON, A.D. 1200.

- (a) Þær wæron Sæxisce menn: folca ealra ærnest;   
 (b) Ther weoren Sæxisce men: folken alre ærnest;   
 (c) There were Saxon men: of folk all wretchedest;   
 (a) And þa Alemainscan menn: geomerestan ealra leoda:   
 (b) And thá Alemainsce men: geomerest alre leoden:   
 (c) And the Alemannish men: saddest of all people:   
 (a) Arthur mid his sweorde: fæge-scipe worhte:   
 (b) Arthur mid his sweorde: fæie-scipe wurhte:   
 (c) Arthur with his sword: death-work wrought:   
 (a) Eall þæt he smát (t6): hit was sona forgedón:   
 (b) Al that he smat to: hit was sone fordon:   
 (c) All that he smote to: hit was soon done-for:   
 (a) Eall was se cyning abolgen: swá byð se wilda bár—   
 (b) Al was the king abolgen: swá bið the wilde bar—   
 (c) All was the king enraged: as is the wild boar.

## QUESTIONS.

1. What is the Transition Period? Its greatest extent? Subdivisions? Nature of these? Proper date of the Semi-Saxon?
2. When did good A.S. cease to be *written*? Craik thinks it may have ceased to be *spoken* long before this.
3. The corruption of the language is differently accounted for. State the three views (a), (b), (c).
4. Explain accurately the nature of a *synthetic*, as opposed to an *analytic* language. Which seems the most ancient state? Show that speech runs quite as readily from a *simple* to a *composite* state, as the other way. English appears to prove this?
5. There is *intrinsic* evidence of decay in A.S., which proves that it must have broken up independently of the Norman Conquest?
6. Still this event exercised a negative and indirect action on this tendency, therefore view (a) is erroneous, (b) partly true, (c) correct?
7. Mr. Guest's theory seems to be the *very reverse* of truth?
8. What is the general nature of the *grammar* during this stage? What changes occurred in the verb?
9. In the noun a preference is shown for one declension? Jacob Grimm, in attributing this to an indirect action of the French tongue, exhibits a greater knowledge of A.S. and modern English than of the intermediate stages of the language?
10. Change in the adjective? Gender? Article? Pronoun? Syntax?
11. What amount of Norman words were adopted into the *written* language during this period? One remarkable instance?



seems to have been gradually laid aside for the Norman, after the last efforts were made to keep up that system. Warton, in his *History of English Poetry*, observes that Mabillon "was mistaken in asserting that the Saxon way of writing was entirely abolished in England at the time of the Norman Conquest. . . . An intermixture of the Saxon character is common in English and Latin MSS. before the reign of Edward III., but of a few types only". This adoption of an alphabet, not perfectly corresponding to the old, helped to increase the state of confusion in which the orthography then was, and remained for centuries after. "Not only are almost all the words spelled differently by different authors, but even by the same author, in the same book, in the same page, and frequently in the same line"—*Diversions of Purley*. At a period of reconstruction, of course, no standard can exist to be followed implicitly by all, and each writer being left to decide for himself, the result must be confusion and utter absence of anything like uniformity. So uncertain is the orthography, that no importance can be attached to the manner of spelling any word during this period, except so far as it may help to indicate the current pronunciation, as we shall see was the case with the *Ormulum*.

4. What is true of the orthography, is equally true of the *grammar* throughout the whole of this stage of the language. It varies considerably with writers supposed to be contemporary, nor is any author always consistent with himself. Consequently grammar, as the art of teaching the proper use of words, cannot be said to have existed at all. But the efforts that were made at composition had this advantage, that they helped gradually to mould the language into something fixed and satisfactory. Our opportunities of examining its structure at this epoch are not over numerous. The times generally were not favourable to letters, and the few men who did devote themselves to literature were divided between the claims of no less than three rival languages. *Saxon* was employed in the national ballad poetry, a species of literature which is the earliest in almost every country. It had, probably, existed during the Semi-Saxon times, but now rose into importance in proportion as

the language became universally spoken by all classes. *French* continued still to be employed exclusively at the court, and in the composition of romances, or what would now be called the fashionable literature of the day. The monks wrote all their learned works in *Latin*, besides some considerable productions in their native tongue. Indeed the constant employment of Latin all along by this class of writers must be looked upon as a most fortunate circumstance. It, probably, saved the English language, or at least prevented it from sinking into the condition of a mere *patois*, such as the Flemish has continued to be owing to the general use of *French* by the Belgians in *Littérature*. In England the literary world being divided between three rivals, the native speech, having numbers on its side, ultimately succeeded in gaining the ascendant. The case might have been otherwise, had all parties united their energies in endeavouring to render Norman literature *national* in the island. The first great genius that arose, say Chaucer, finding the Saxon totally unfit for literary purposes, the necessary result of the neglect of 300 years, would have been compelled to use the French tongue, if he hoped to hand down his name to posterity. Without pursuing the argument further, it must be allowed that whatever influence all the literature of the Semi-Saxon and Early English Periods (1066–1350) has had, both positively and negatively, in moulding the language into its present shape, is due to a body of men, whose services we are ever prone to lose sight of.

5. In general it may be said that the *grammar* of the popular ballad poetry is more advanced than that of the rhyming chronicles, and of the *Ormulum*. The latter works seem to have been formed more upon the *literary* language of the preceding age, whilst the former may have developed itself at once, and independently, out of the spoken tongue which, it has been shown, was, from the remotest times, always more English in the modern sense than the written. At the same time, it should be observed, that the present copies of most of the old songs are considerably modernised, even as they are printed in Percy's *Reliques*. The *Battle of Otterburne* cannot, in its actual form, be placed further back than the year 1450, though referring to an event

which occurred in the year 1388. In general, no sort of reliance can be placed upon the dates to which the greater portion of old English poetry has been assigned, least of all to Warton's chronological arrangement. In his history of English poetry he alludes to a translation of the O. and N. T. in verse, which he believes "to have been made before the year 1200". This would make it Semi-Saxon, but it will be seen, by comparing the following passage with the specimens in the last section, that it is quite English, and intelligible even in its old orthography:—

"*Oure ladi and hire sistur stoden under the Roode,  
And Seint John and Marie Magdaleyne with wel sori moode:  
Ur ladi biheold hire swete son i-brought in gret peyue,  
Ffor mounes gultes nouthen her and nothing for myne.  
Marie weop wel sore and bitter teres leet,  
The teres fullen uppon the ston down at hire feet*".

The different forms *hire* and *her*, *oure* and *ur*, *ffor* and *for*, will serve to illustrate what has just been said of the irregular orthography of these times. *Weop*=*wept* is an instance of a *strong* conjugation now obsolete, but retained in Old English. See its gradual changes in the comparative table, section VI. §. 8, and compare it with *weoxon* in this section §. 8. The main difference of structure, between this period and the Semi-Saxon, consists in a further softening and weakening without a total rejection of certain grammatical inflexions, the result of which was to render them *less important* in construing, and to bring into play an increased number of *relational* words to perform the functions, and often to supply the place of the enfeebled case and verbal endings. This gives such a new air to the language, that in virtue of it, we are now justified in calling it English. A practical test of the effects of this change may be had by endeavouring to turn a piece of Semi-Saxon and of Old into Modern English. It will be found, as a rule, that the latter will be intelligible with the aid of a glossary and occasional notes, whilst the former will require an interlinear translation, with a certain amount of grammatical analysis. For instance, the following passage from Layamon is sufficiently intelligible in the appended Old English version, while all the words of the text in *Italics* still require further explanation:—

"Wace was *ihoten*  
 He wol coude writen  
 And he *hoe* yef *thare*  
*Adhelen* Alienor,  
*The wacs* Henries quene  
*The heyas* Kinges".

"Wace was i-het (high)  
 He wel cude writé  
 And he it gav to the  
 Noble Elleanor  
 Wha was Henres quene  
 The heye (strong) Kingé".

6. The inflexional forms were most commonly weakened by substituting in final syllables, *-e* for the Saxon *-a*, *-e*, *-u*, *-o*, *-na*, *ra*, *um*, etc., distinguishing the noun and verb endings. "In the old English, all these were represented by the final *-e*, and the loss of the final *-e* is characteristic of our modern dialect. It is obvious that either of these changes must have brought about a new language. The confusion of the vowels, or the loss of the final *-e*, was the confounding of tense and person, of case and number—in short, of those grammatical forms to which language owes its precision and its clearness. Other forms were to be sought for before our tongue could again serve the purposes of science or of literature"—*English Rhythms*, II. The forms, or rather expedients, here alluded to, were the particles or relational words, as already stated. The plural of *call*=*all*, and the present indicative of *bringan*=*bring*, would be thus inflected in the three stages of the language hitherto investigated:—

<i>Anglo-Saxon.</i>	<i>Semi-Saxon.</i>	<i>Early English.</i>
N. A. ealle,	ealé,	alle.
D. Abl. eallum,	tó ealé,	to allé.
Gen. ealra,	alré,	of allé.
ic bringe,	bringe,	bringe.
þu bringst,	bringast,	bringest.
he bringeð,	bringedh,	bringeth.
pl. bringað,	bringadh,	bringeth (see sec. V. §. 6).

Where it should be observed that this final *-e* was in early English, perhaps *never mute*, and in middle English generally constituted a syllable when it represented the inflexions of the old language. The importance of this, in the scansion of our early poets, is obvious, and will be again referred to in the next section.

7. Other changes that occur are not so uniform. Some of them come earlier, some a little later on; some are met with in one writer and not in another of the same time,

nor even with any regularity in the same work. There are symptoms already manifesting themselves of a desire to shake off the final *n* of the infinitive, and all distinction now ceases to be observed between this mood and the gerund in *-enne*, *-anne*. In A.S., the particle *tō* was never used with the inf., always with the gerund. The confusion of the two was occasioned by not observing this rule. It gave rise to the modern inf., which, in reality, is a sort of verbal noun, governed by a preposition, as the A.S. gerund was said to be the dative case of the inf., with its proper case ending: *witan*=scire, *tō witanne*=ad sciendum, both represented by the modern *to know*; so: *swerian*, *to swerigenne*=to swear, *writan*, *to writanne*=to write, etc. Connected with this was the gradual change of the active participle from *-ende* to *-and*, *-inge* and *-ing*: *swerigēnde*=*sweriging*=*swearing*, *writēnde*=*writinge*=*writing*, *beōnde*=*beānd*=*being*, *hebbēnde*=*hebbend*=*haband*=*having*. The following scraps are of the same age, about 1300 or earlier; yet one retains the old form, while the other has already adopted the new:—

Witness of lord is ever trewe  
Wisdom *servand* to littell newe:  
Lord's rihtwisnesse riht hertes *famand*,  
But of lord is liht eghen *sighand*, etc.

Almightin louerd, hegest kinge,  
Thu give me sell *timinge*  
To thau men this werdes *biginge*.  
The lauerd God to *wurthinge*, etc.

The change arose from confounding the A.S. *-ung* and *-ing*, common in verbal nouns, with the active participle of the verb, the meaning being often much alike, from *grétan* (to greet) *grétende*=*greeting*; but *gréting*=a greeting (verbal noun); from *halgian* (to hallow), act. part.=*halgigenne*=*hallowing*, and verbal noun *halgung*=a hallowing, or consecration; so *clænsung*=a cleansing, *hwistlung*=a whistling, *byrging*=a tasting. This is the reason why our active participles so readily become nouns: the *rising* sun, early *rising*. They are often, in fact, quite as much nouns as participles, which is the case wherever *-ing* has a corresponding A.S. verbal noun in *-ung* or *-ing*; such are not participles turned into substances, as grammars parse them, but real verbal nouns, which have displaced the proper active participles in *-ende*, wherever they are used as such. Both endings coëxisted side by side from the earliest times, and continued to do so in the Scottish dia-

lect down to the sixteenth century, without the distinction being always observed. Barbour has both *likand* and *liking* used correctly in the following passage from his *Bruce*:—

Such thyngis that are *likand* (part.)  
 Tyll mannys hearing ar *pleasand* . . .  
 Hors or hund or othir thing  
 That war *pleasand* to thar *liking* (noun).

So a prose writer in 1572 has “in the print-*ing*” and “discord in teach-*ing*” as verbal nouns, but say-*and*, kenn-*and*, as participles; *and* is exceedingly rare in Chaucer, the substitution having been fairly established in the southern dialect during the present period. We may now, perhaps, understand such idioms as *a-fishing*, *a-hunting*, *a-sleep* = *a-sleeping*, *a-wake* = *a-waking*, where *a* was in A.S. and early E. the preposition *on* = *in*: “with that he fell *on slepe*”—*Holinshed*. So *on lyve* = *alive*, in which expressions *on* evidently governs not a participle, but a *noun*, in the ordinary way: “The Erle of Salisburie was taken *on lyfe* = *in his lifetime* = *alive*: *aboard* = *on board*, and *on side* = *on one side* = *aside* in the phrase, “for hope of life was set *on side*”—*Hall*.

8. The following table, containing some of the forms most used during the three stages hitherto examined, may help to convey a comprehensive idea of the gradual transition, and of the changes that occurred during the present period.

	<i>Anglo-Saxon.</i>	<i>Semi-Saxon.</i>	<i>Early English.</i>	<i>Modern.</i>
Pronoun.	{ heom	to heom	to hom	to them
	{ heora	here	of hire	of their
	{ þære	to thære	to thare	to the
	{ seó	heó	ho	she
Noun.	{ suna	sunes	of the suné	of the son
	{ dóhtra	dóhtras	dauhtren*	daughters
	{ sweostrum	to the swestres	to the swlstren*	to the sisters
	{ se góda	the godé	the godé	the good
Adjective.	{ smæla	smalre	of smalles	of small (pl.)
	{ strengre	strangor	stranger	stronger
	{ strengste	strengeste	strangest	strongest

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\* For certain plurals in *en*, occurring in Old E. and not found in A.S., see sec. vi., §. 9.

	<i>Anglo Saxon.</i>	<i>Semi-Saxon.</i>	<i>Early English.</i>	<i>Modern.</i>
Verb.	wæron	weoren	weren	were
	hœfdon	hæfden	heddén	had (pl.)
	hengon	henged	hengeth	hanged (pl.)
	sagde	sæde	seldé	said
	hi singað	hi singedh	hi singth	they sing
	beón	býn	bón	may be
	wyrcean	wircen	wirchén	to work
Participle.	axian	axien	axen	to ask
	geboren	gebore	iboré	born
	gelufod	gelufed	ylovéd	loved
	to lufigenne	to lufian	to loven	to love
	lufian			
	lufigende	lufigend	lovand	loving
	bernende	bernend	byrninge	burning
Adverb, etc.	weoxon	woxen	wexide	waxed pl. (grew)
	hwæne	hwane	wane	when
	fear	fear	for	far
	bútan	búten	buté	but, etc.

9. While the structure of the language is thus rapidly becoming English, the vocabulary remains still almost purely Saxon. The amount of Norman that was now introduced it is impossible to determine; for it varies according to the fancy or inclination of the writer. The *Ormulum* is nearly as free of Gallicisms as the language of Layamon, while in other writers, especially Robert of Gloucester, French words seem to be introduced with a certain facility, implying that they must have been current in the language at the time: this *noble sone*—in this *manere*. Bute he come to *amendement*—to ys *contrei* drow, etc. Perhaps this is what Robert de Brunne complains of when he says that much of the compositions of these times were become quite unintelligible to a common audience; for the great body of Normanisms now incorporated in the language, passed into it through the current literature of these times, and were, when first used, what we should call learned and pedantic terms, of course not generally understood by the Saxon-speaking and illiterate portions of the population. In the next section it will be seen that the great influx of French words did not take place until the Anglo-Normans began to cultivate English and to substitute it for French in literature:—

Thai sayd in so quaynte Inlis  
That mony one wate not what it is,  
And forsooth I couth nought  
So strange Inglis as thai wrought.

There were, nevertheless, certain classes of French words, which it will be safe to say had found their way into the *spoken* language by this time, though we may not be able to fix the precise date of their introduction. A reference to the social condition of the two races will help to discover their nature. The Anglo-Norman lords of the land, to protect themselves against the Saxon rebel, began, soon after the invasion, to build strongholds all over the island, and to people them with their foreign retainers. Each of these fastnesses thus became, so to say, a little French colony, speaking the French language and holding little converse with the Saxon tillers of the soil. Here justice was administered and all legal questions settled by foreign lawyers in a foreign tongue. In the same way all pleadings were conducted in French at the King's court, so that in every instance the natives were compelled, for the sake of their suits, to plead in that tongue, or, at least, to acquaint themselves with its legal technicalities. The great body of such words are therefore Norman: *plaintiff, defendant, jury, judge, justice, magistrate, chancellor, attorney, court, fine, damages, parliament, legist, tax, assess, mulct, o-yes* (*oyez*=hear ye), *oyer and terminer* (to hear and determine). The Norman barons and knights were at this time the most chivalrous and warlike in Europe. The language of war and chivalry is almost exclusively French: *gallant, champion, courtesy, challenge, tournament, soldier, militia, arms, to march, battle*, etc. All the higher dignities of the Church were filled with Normans or Italians. They occasioned a second accession of church words, such as: *sacrament, friar, altar, sacrifice, ceremony, religion, tonsure, sermon, prayer, devotion, piety, idolatry, pagan, scandal, interdict*. The passion of the Norman kings and nobles for the *chase* enriched the language with many French terms relating to this subject, without, however, in this instance superseding the old stock supplied by their Saxon predecessors. Hence we have side by side: the *hunt* and the *chase, hawk* and *falcon, fox* and *renard, rabbit* and *coney, hare* and *leveret, course, race* and *race-course, brace* and *couple, wood* and *forest, thicket* and *copse* (*couper*), *underwood* and *copsewood*, etc.

The rude native had been hitherto content to eat his *ox*



and *cow*, his *calf*, *sheep*, and *swine*, or *hog*, as he does to this day his *lamb* and *kid*; but in course of time he learned from his Norman rulers that these animals were only fit for human food under the softened name of *beef*, *veal*, *mutton*, *pork*. To such an extent is the language of cookery French that one would almost suppose the art was unknown previous to the Conquest. Thus it is that words have a peculiar significance of their own. They often speak eloquently of a people's glory and reverses, of prosperity and disaster, of freedom and bondage, of generations of tyranny sullenly resisted, sometimes hopelessly, sometimes with a happy issue. The same story of Norman tyranny and Saxon thralldom is told by a certain class of native terms, which, without being altogether set aside, have yet been displaced from their proper position by corresponding French words. "We may trace, I think, a permanent record of this depression in the fact that a vast number of Teutonic words, which have a noble sense in the kindred language of Germany, and evidently had once such in the A.S., have forfeited this in whole or in part, have been contented to take a lower place, while, in most instances, a word of the Latin moiety of the language has assumed the place which they have vacated"—*English Past and Present*. Thus *tapfer* is *courageous* in German, but *dapper* in English is only *spruce* or *smart*. Some of the instances, however, here cited by Dr. Trench, are rather examples of the danger of building theories on words before they are thoroughly sifted. *Haut* may have been *skin* in German, but *hýd*=*hide*, never meant in A.S. any thing more dignified than it now does; *hyd-gild* was "money paid to escape flogging". If there is no idea of *too great haste* attached to the German word *rasch*, there certainly always was to the English *rash*, from A.S. *hreošan*=to rush violently. So the primary sense of *beam* in A.S. was a *beam*, *post*, *stock*, and even *splint*, though the German *baum* may imply a "living tree", as opposed to "dead timber". In these words, therefore, there is no trace of French action on the Saxon portion of the vocabulary.

10. As the French is itself an offshoot of the Latin, the class of words introduced during the present stage has been called "Latin of the third Period", or *Norman Latin*, as dis-

tinguished from the *Roman* and *Church* Latin of the Saxon times. As Latin is, again, a member of the great Indo-European Family, it naturally possesses a number of radical words common also to the A.S. Hence the difficulty that sometimes arises of determining the true origin of such English words as correspond in these two languages. We must, in such cases, be guided by the *nature* of the words themselves. If they are concerned with the business of every-day life, or expressive of notions not above the comprehension of the most illiterate during the previous stage, the presumption will be that they came directly from the A.S., otherwise the chances will be in favour of a Romance origin. The following are a few words which, *etymologically*, might be equally well derived from the A.S. or Romance :

<i>Romance.</i>	<i>Anglo-Saxon.</i>	<i>English.</i>	<i>Romance.</i>	<i>Anglo-Saxon.</i>	<i>English.</i>
me,	me,	me.	mulgère,	meolcian,	to milk.
te,	the,	thee.	jugum,	geoc,	joke.
tu,	thu,	thou.	ives (if),	iw,	yaw.
via,	weg,	way.	jardin,	gyrdan,	garden.
vermia,	wyrro,	worm.	gagner,	gewinnan,	win-gain (?)
ventum,	wind,	wind.	loi,	lag-lah,	law.
temps,	time,	time.	long,	long,	long.
vinum,	win,	wine.	velle,	willan,	will.
jeune,	geong,	young.	vulg-us,	folc,	folk.
nord,	norð,	north.	insula,	ealand,	island.*
sud,	suð,	south.	guise,	wise,	wise.
ouest,	east,	east.	guerre,	wær,	war.
est,	west,	west.	dies,	dæg,	day.
nom,	nama,	name.	garder,	ward,	guard.
hesternus,	gystrandæg,	yester(day).	garantir,	warian,	warrant?
habere,	habban,	to have.	mens,	gemynd,	mind.

*Romance* is here used in an extended sense to include both the Latin and French. It properly means such languages as are derived from the Latin or *Roman* tongue—

“Frankis spech is cald *romance*,  
So sais clerkes and men of France”—

*Robert de Brunne.*

But the single reflection that all these terms must have been constantly in the mouths of the masses, from the time of Alfred to that of Chaucer, will decide the question in

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\* *s* here is a later intrusion by wrongly assumed derivation from *insula*. It is always *iland* from *ealand*, down to the seventeenth century. The mistake arose from its apparent relation to *isle=ile=insula*, and from the great source of such anomalies, ignorance of A.S.

favour of the A.S., though some of them may actually approach nearer to the Latin in form. For a parallel reason the following will be either doubtful or Norman :—

Romance.	Anglo-Saxon.	English.	Romance.	Anglo-Saxon.	English.
tabula,	taef,	table.	vastare,	westan,	to waste.
vallum,	weal,	wail.	fluere,	flēowan,	to flow.
gulle,	wiglian,	wile, guile.	figere,	fegan,	to fix.
miscere,	miscan,	to mix.	curare,	carian,	to care.
mons,	munt,	mount.	spolium,	spillan,	spoil.
sugere,	sucan,	suck.	habilis,	abal,	able.
choisir,	coosan,	choose.			

Here the words in *Italics* are now generally referred to the A.S. *Choose* must be Saxon, because it belongs to the *strong* conjugation: *choose*, *chose*, and *chase* (old), *chosen*. It is a rule that all foreign words are inflected according to weak forms. No French noun ever took the plur. in *-en*, no verb any other past tense and part. but *-ed*. We say legal-*ity*, but lawful-*ness*. Formerly all the words in the two foregoing lists, and half the language besides, were derived from Latin, Greek, Hebrew, or anything but A.S.\* Attention to these principles, and generally to the *nature* of the words we are comparing, is a great check upon the tendency, strongly developed in some minds, to push etymological investigations too far, and may help to prevent such fanciful derivations as *dream* from *drama*, "because life is a drama, and drama is a dream"—*Johnson's Preface*; or *Constantinople* from *Constantine the Noble* (actually given by one writer); or *quaff* from *go off*, *quooff*, *quaaff*, seriously proposed by Skinner; or *King Pepin* from *δοκερ* cited by H. Tooke: *δοκερ*—*ήπερ*—*όπερ*—*Diaper*—*Napkin*—*Nipkin*—*Pepkin*—*Pippin*—*King*—*King Pepin*; or all the proper names of Genesis, from corresponding words or idioms in Flemish or Welsh, according to the humour of the writer.

11. Of the literary remains of this period, the most interesting in the history of the language is the *Ormulum*, so called, it is supposed, by the author from his own name, *Orm* or *Ormin*. It consists of a metrical paraphrase of such portions of Scripture as are introduced into the service and offices of the Church, extending to about 10,000 long, or

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\* Minschew derives the inf. particle *to* from the Greek *τὸ*: to make = *τὸ ποιῖν*. Others from the Latin *ad*., and Sharp from the Hebrew.

20,000 short lines, as first edited by Dr. M. White of Oxford in 1852. In it all the peculiar features of the Old English dialect are strongly developed, and it is "the oldest, the purest, and by far the most valuable specimen" of this stage of the language "that time has left us"—*English Rhythms*, I. Much diversity of opinion prevails as to the time of its composition. The work just cited assigns it to the twelfth century, and others even to the eleventh; but, to judge from intrinsic evidence, it cannot be placed earlier than the middle of the thirteenth, if so early. It was, probably, written sometime between 1250 and 1300, or about a century after Layamon's *Brut*. Indeed its style, as compared with this production, exhibits the language in so very advanced a state, that we should be disposed, at first sight, to bring it forward still further, did we not remember that a few years in the infancy or in the old age of a language, produce greater changes than are apparent in many centuries of its maturity. We would venture to say, that the difference between the language of our time and that of the Ormulum, after a lapse of 600 years, is considerably less than what is observable between it and that of the preceding age.

12. The orthography of the Ormulum is remarkable, as affording additional proof of the absence of any fixed standard for spelling at the time of its composition. Its author feeling that the great uncertainty of the orthography rendered it quite useless as a guide to the real pronunciation of words, and considering that this should be one of the first objects of a written tongue, proceeds to draw out a plan of his own, by which he hopes to attain to this result, and to which he accordingly attaches great importance, insisting upon a strict adherence to it on the part of all future copyists of his work. Its chief characteristic consists in *always doubling the consonant following short vowels*, so as to make them *short* by position, just as they would be said to be *long by position* in Latin or Greek prosody: sētt = set, thīss = this, thātt = that, bēttre = better, Gōdd = God, but gōd = good; where it appears that vowels followed by *single* consonants are meant by him to be pronounced *long*. Great light is in this way thrown upon the current pronunciation

at the time. "If it was his rule always to leave the consonant single after the long or *name* sound (as in *mate*, *meet*, *mite*, *mote*, *mute*), and to double it after every vowel otherwise sounded, then . . . we should learn that while *God*, *thus*, *till*, *up*, *will*, *his*, *off*, *wit*, *for*, *edge*, *back*, *it*, *with*, *on*, *that*, were all pronounced in his day as at present, with the *shut* sound, *thine*, *sheep*, *smile*, *child*, took as they now do, the *name* (long) sound; that the *e* in *legg* (*lay*), and in the first syllable of *seggde* (*said*), was sounded as in our *egg* . . . that *bun* was probably pronounced *boon*, *don*, *doon*", etc. (*Craik's Outlines*, 72). This method does not appear to have survived its originator, for in the next period we find it superseded, at least by writers of the Anglo-Norman school, who introduced the *e* mute to lengthen the preceding vowel, leaving the consonant single when they wished it to be short: *sāle*, *sēl*; *tāle*, *tēl*, also *tell*. The appended comparative table of orthographic systems at different times employed, may serve to throw some light on a matter sufficiently obscure, and which has not been hitherto fully explained:—

*Anglo-Saxon. Early English. Middle English. Modern.*

SHORT VOWELS.

can,	cann,	can,	can.
stif,	stiff,	stiff,	stiff.
God,	Godd,	God,	God.

LONG VOWELS.

gód,	god,	gode,	good.
œn,	on,	on,	one.
áð,	ath,	othe,	oath.
bár,	bor,	bore,	boar.
bán,	bon,	bone,	bone.
stœn,	ston,	stone,	stone.
bóc,	boc,	boke,	book.
mete,	met,	mete,	mete.
fét,	fet,	fete,	feet.
slœp,	slep,	slepe,	sleep.
stém,	stem,	steme,	steam.
sprécan,	sprekenn,	speke,	speak.

This table shows that the long sound in A.S. was denoted by the accent, its absence indicating the short. In the Early English of the Ormulum the long was denoted by a single consonant, the short by a double; in Middle English the

long by a final *e* mute, the short by its absence—all these expedients, except the accent, being employed in modern English, besides many others most capriciously. Thus long *e* by *e* mute in *mete*, *ee* in *feet*, *ea* in *steam*; long *o* by *e* mute in *bone*, *oa* in *oath*, *oo* in *good*, with a change of pronunciation (see Sec. V. §. 4).

## SPECIMENS.

13. The following short extract will serve to illustrate the method pursued in the Ormulum, just explained:

## ORMULUM, 1250—1300.

I hafe set here o<sup>1</sup> thiss boc amang Godspelles<sup>2</sup> wordes  
 Alle thruh meselfen manigword the rimè swa to fillen;<sup>3</sup>  
 Acc<sup>4</sup> thu shal finden<sup>5</sup> that minn word eggwhaer<sup>5</sup> thaer<sup>15</sup> it is ekedd<sup>6</sup>  
 Magg<sup>7</sup> helpen<sup>8</sup> tha<sup>8</sup> thatt reden<sup>9</sup> it to sen<sup>9</sup> and understanden;<sup>9</sup>  
 All thess<sup>9</sup> to better hu thegm<sup>10</sup> buth<sup>11</sup> the Godspell understanden;<sup>9</sup>  
 And for<sup>12</sup> the trowwe<sup>13</sup> icc thatt te birrth<sup>11</sup> wel tholenn<sup>14</sup> mine wordes  
 Eggwhaer<sup>5</sup> thaer<sup>15</sup> thu shalt finden<sup>5</sup> him amang Godspelles<sup>2</sup> wordes.

1=on=in. 2=Gospel's, full genitive in *es*. 3=to fill, to complete; *inf.* in *es* prevailing throughout this and the next period. 4=but, A.S. 5=everywhere. 6=added, cf. A.S. *esc*. 7=may. A.S. *mæg*. 8=those, A.S. 9=all the better how. 10=them; a mixture of A.S. *heom* and Engl. *them*. 11=it becomes. 12=for that=therefore. 13=I trow. 14=to hear. 15=where, A.S.

The style is so very modern that it is hoped these few notes may be sufficient to render the whole perfectly intelligible. The metre is what has been called long Iambic, consisting of not less than fourteen nor more than fifteen syllables, with a break or cæsura at the end of the eighth.

Next to the Ormulum, the most important work of this age is the Rhyming Chronicle of Robert of Gloucester, to whom is also attributed a voluminous collection of the lives of the principal saints in the calendar. The language is more modern than that of the Ormulum, composed probably about the year 1300 or a little later. Here is an extract from the life of St. Patrick, containing an allusion to a famous national tradition:—

Seyn Pateryk com thoru Godes grace to preche in Irelande,  
 To teche men ther<sup>1</sup> ryt believe Jesu Cryste to understonde;<sup>2</sup>  
 So ful of wormes<sup>3</sup> that londe he founde that no man ni myghte gon,<sup>3</sup>  
 In some stede<sup>4</sup> for worms<sup>3</sup> that he nas wenemyd<sup>6</sup> anon;

Seynt Pateryk bade our Lorde Cryst that the londe delyvered were,  
Of thilke foule wormis<sup>1</sup> that none ne com there.

1=*th* for *h*, now for the first time in the plural of the 3 pers. pronoun: *thei* and *their* for *heoru*, *hira*, *hir*; *theom* and *them* for *heom*, *him*; *they* for *hi*, but not fully established in the southern dialect until modern times (see sec. VI., §. 10). 2=the final *s* of *Inf.* has already become a matter of convenience. It is dropped or retained according to the exigencies of the rhyme. 3=three forms of the pl. strong, weak, and modern: *wormis*, *wormes*, *worms*. 4=places, cf. *stead*. 5=*ne* was=*was not*. 6=*wounded*. Here are only two new Norman terms, *grace* and *delyvered*.

The next is from an ode on Heaven, death, and judgment, which may have been written about the same time as the foregoing, though Warton refers it, with a vast amount of poetry of the same age, 1280—1320, to the twelfth century (*Hist. Engl. Poetry*, I, 33). The *alliteration* is sustained throughout very regularly:

#### ALLITERATIVE ODE—1300 (?)

Middel-erd for mon was mad,  
Unmighiti aren is meste mede,  
This hedy hath on honde yhad,  
That hevene hem is haste to hede.  
Ich erde a blisse budel us bade,   *That he ben derne done.*  
The dreri domesdai to drede  
Of sinful saughting sone be sad,  
That derne doth this derne dede,  
This wrakefall werkes under wede,  
In soule soteleth sone.

Rhyme began to be now universally employed, instead of the old measure, especially by the so-called rhyming chroniclers, who translated from the French. Its introduction must be attributed to Norman influence, though it was known from the remotest times, and used by the Saxons, especially in their Latin compositions. A good specimen is afforded by a ballad written in the year 1301, on the occasion of a defeat sustained by the French under the Count of Artois, at the hands of the revolted Flemings:

Susteneth lordinges. bothe zonge and olde,  
Of the Frynsche men that were so proude ante bolde,  
How the Flemmyshe men bohten hem and solde,  
    Upon a Wednesday.  
Betere hem were at home in huere londe,  
Than force seche Flemishe bi the sea stronde,  
Whare souch moni Frensh wyf wryngeth hire honde,  
    And syngeth welaway.

The Kynge of Ffrance made statutes newe,  
 In the londe of Flaunders among false and trewe,  
 That the communs of Bruges ful sore can arewe,  
     And seiden among hem.  
 Gedere we us togedere hardilyche at ene,  
 Take we the bailifs by twenty and by tene,  
 Clappe we of the hevedes an oven o the grene  
     And cast we in the fen.

The poetry of this period is generally intelligible with a glossary and attention to the peculiarities noted above. But there occur occasional passages, which at first do not appear to be English at all, such as :

1300—1307.

Ich libben lonclonginge fur semlokest of al thyng,  
 He may me blysse bringe icham in hire banndounn,  
 An hendy happe ichabbe yhent ichot, etc.

And :

Nes ner gom so gladly on gere,  
 Y wolde wyte in world who hire kenede  
 This burde bryht, zef hire wil were,  
 Heo my bed go my gates, lest hire gremede,  
 Ne kept heo non henyngre here.

We shall close this section with an extract from an elegy on the death of Edward I., 1307, which reads quite English :

"The messenger to the Pope com,  
 And seyde that our kynge was dede,  
 Ys own honde the lettre he nom (took),  
 Y wis his herte was ful gret :  
 The Pope himself the lettre redde,  
 And spec a word of gret honour :  
 'Alas !' he said, 'is Edward ded ?  
 Of Cristendome he ben the flour !'

"The Pope is to chaumbre wende,  
 For dole nemihte he speke na more ;  
 And after cardinales he sende  
 That much conthen of Cristes lore.  
 Both the lasse ant eke the more,  
 Bed hem both red and synge ;  
 Gret deol me myhte se thore (there)  
 Mony mon is honde wryngre".

Our limited space compels the omission of a document exceedingly interesting in the history of the language: the proclamation of Henry III., in 1258, to the people of Huntingdon, considered the earliest extant specimen of what may be called *English*, as opposed to Semi-Saxon: "Henr', thurg Godes fultome (help) king on Engleneloande, Lhoauerd on Yreloand, Duk on Norm' on Aquitain' and Eorl on Aniow, send gretinge to alle hise halde, *i'aerde and i'aewed* (learned and unlearned, or *lay*), on Huntendon' schir", etc. It is, moreover, remarkable as being the only piece of *prose* connecting the Saxon Chronicle with Mandeville, 1154—1350.



## QUESTIONS.

1. What process distinguishes Old E. from Semi-Saxon? How is Old English subdivided? Extent of Early E.?

2. How did the union of the two races consequent on the reparation of England from the mainland effect the language at first?

3. What change took place in the alphabet? How did this affect the orthography?

4. What three languages were used at this time in literature? Why may this be considered a fortunate circumstance?

5. What species of composition exhibits the language in the most forward state? Why? What is the chief difference between the grammar of Semi-Saxon and Early English? What great change did this necessitate?

6. How was the general softening of the A.S. inflexions effected? This is important in scansion? *He loves, we, ye, they love*, in Early English?

7. Mention some other changes. Are these uniform? What is the origin of our infinitive? How far is it a real mood? How is the change of A.S. active participle in *-ende* to *-ing* explained? Are all our words in *-ing* necessarily active participles? "He forbiðdis al discord in *teaching*, *sayand* let na scismes be amang you". Parse the two words in Italics.

8. Show from the words *heom* and *pære* in the *transition table*, that the case-endings, even when retained, had already lost their force and significance. *Singað* explains why the termination *th* or *eth* in verbs was plural, not only singular, as now?

9. What is the general state of the vocabulary? How far is the Ormulum affected by Normanisms? Mention certain *classes* of French words introduced into the spoken language by this time, and account for this on historical grounds, and give instances.

10. Is *one* or *six* from the Latin *unus* and *sex*, or from the A.S. *án* and *six*? *Eight* from A.S. *eahta*, or French *huit*? Why is it sometimes difficult to say whether a word is A.S. or Romance in its origin? What rule is to be observed? In comparative philology, what principle, if attended to, will prevent false and absurd derivations?

11. Give an account of the Ormulum. Its date, etc. Its language as compared with that of Layamon.

12. In what does the chief peculiarity of its *orthography* consist? How is this a clue to the *pronunciation* of the day? Did its orthographic system prevail to any extent? Mention the different expedients employed in Saxon, Early, Middle, and Modern English times, to denote the length of the vowels.

## SECTION V.

(1350-1450).

Middle English Period—Further Development—State of the Grammar—Vocabulary—Norman Element—Cause of its Late Introduction—Specimens—Barbour—Douglas—Account of the Scotch Dialect.

1. So far as the structure of the language is concerned, there is no essential difference between this period and the foregoing. They are both comprised under the one name of *Old English*, and have been divided into the *Early* and *Middle* English Periods, in order to analyze more accurately the steps by which the transition was effected from Semi-Saxon to Modern English. Though generally described as a period of *reconstruction*, it was, in reality, one of further *dissolution*; or, in other words, the process by which the language was moulded into its present shape, was what might be called a process of *elimination*, a continual softening down and eliding of the old grammatical inflexions, which, if allowed to proceed far enough, would have resulted in a speech as nearly as possible perfectly analytic. So long as this tendency to simplicity of structure is actively at work, we are in the transition stage; as soon as it ceases, or is arrested at a certain state, we reach the Modern or Fixed Period of the language. This was attained to about the year 1450, after which time the language sustained no further loss of grammatical forms. All, or nearly all, the inflexions that it possessed then, it still retains. That date, therefore, marks the time when the process of reconstruction was complete, leaving an extent of about one hundred years to the Present or Middle English Period, 1350-1450.

2. The difficulty of distinguishing between one stage and another increases in proportion as the real difference diminishes. So long as we have to deal with bold landmarks, standing prominently forward, we are enabled by their presence or absence to trace and point out the changes that the language has undergone from time to time. But when these become weakened or effaced, the minor differences that still exist, and by which alone we can draw a

line between two periods, are very apt to escape our notice and pass without observation. This is the difficulty that immediately arises when we set about comparing the present with the foregoing period, and it is increased by the fact that many grammatical forms which are considered peculiarly characteristic of Early English, are constantly occurring in the Middle English Period. The last circumstance, however, gives us the clue to what must be considered the only essential difference between the two, viz.: that *inflections still kept up, and which in the former preserved a certain innate force and significance, have in the latter lost their true meaning and import*—*heom* or *hom* may occasionally, in Old English, have its full dative force without further aid; in Middle English it never can, if used at all, without the addition of the relational *to*: *to hom*. So the final *e* in *alle* may convey a plural meaning in the *one*; in the *other* it is devoid of such power. Hence the grammatical forms of Middle English are not *distinguishing* terminations, being useless as guides to the sense of a passage, and requiring the addition of the relational words, just as much as if they were not employed; they are different ways of writing a word, availed of as a great convenience by the poets of the time, in the same way as Homer turned to account the unsettled state of the Greek language when he wrote. Chaucer uses or drops, as best suits his purpose, the proper infinitive and other terminations that still lingered in the language: “that it was may *me thoughten* tho” (then); and further on: “*me-thought* one night in my sleeping”; “women desyren to *have* soveraynte”; and “he was worthy *han* his lyfe”; to *sain* and to *say*, to *maken* and to *make*, to *seen* and to *see*, *youngé* (plur.) and *young*, *tho thinges* and *those things*, *gone* and *y-gone*, *he told* and *he y-told*, where the past participle suffix *y=ge*. A.S. has so far lost its true import, that it is actually transferred to the past tense for the sake of the metre. The consequence was that, later on, when it was thought desirable to give the language a certain uniformity, all these double forms were felt to be an incumbrance, and, the tendency being towards simplicity, the older and more complicate were doomed, and very soon disappeared altogether.

3. The final *e*, which in Early English served for such a variety of purposes, and was, perhaps, never mute before a consonant, having now become quite meaningless, is often not pronounced as a distinct syllable, and only retained in writing as it is to this day. In Chaucer sometimes it forms a syllable, sometimes it does not; and the difficulty of determining when it should be pronounced, or not, has occasioned much doubt and difference of opinion as to the real nature of his poetic system. Some hold that it is regulated by the *accent* alone, as is *Christabel* and some of Walter Scott's poetry; others that it is strictly syllabic, of the same nature as, and the true origin of, our heroic measure. The latter is now the generally received opinion, and is adopted by Tyrwhitt, to whom we owe the first correct edition of the *Canterbury Tales* (1775). He supposes that Chaucer borrowed it from the Italians, and observes that, as with them, it is generally endecasyllabic, occasionally extended to twelve syllables (endecasillabo sdruciollo), sometimes limited to ten (endecasillabo tronco), as it nearly always is in the modern heroic system. The two, however, are so far identical that the *accent* in both is the same, falling regularly on the even syllable, the tenth being the last accented in all cases. The final *e* in Chaucer, is usually said to constitute a distinct syllable, when it stands for any of the *old endings*, for the *French e* at that time pronounced, or is *adverbial*, provided always the following word begin with a consonant. It would be, perhaps, better to say, that in these instances, it has or has not syllabic force, according to the requirements of the metre, to which accent, grammar, and pronunciation are generally made subservient by the Middle English poets.

4. With regard to the *e* French (called *e* feminine), it is quite certain that the new words retained for some time both their proper accent and pronunciation, only gradually conforming themselves to the genius of the English tongue. In this the tendency, we have seen, was to throw the accent as far back as possible, in French to throw it forward. Hence Chaucer constantly varies the accent of many new terms to suit his purpose, as : *languáge* and *language*, *natúre* and *nature*, *virtue* and *virtúe*, *commandé ment* and *commánde-*

*ment, contraire and contraire, courage, pilgrimage, etc.* As soon as the accent was permanently shifted, the final *e* ceased to be pronounced, and the word became thoroughly *Anglicised*. Perhaps it was this French practice that occasioned a remarkable license, observable especially in ballad poetry down to recent times, of varying the accent even of Saxon words at pleasure: *ladý, harpèr, singèr, mornìng, singìng*. The old endings, now universally represented by the final *e* syllabic, are principally, in *nouns*, the dative singular and genitive plural; in *adjectives*, the plural; and in *verbs*, the 1st and 3rd person singular of the present and past tenses; besides, a further weakened form of the infinitive, *givé, lové, také*, for *given, loven, taken*. Mr. Guest has even shown that in some instances, though very rarely, it preserves its full inflexional force, without the aid of separate particles or relational words. Thus

“Hire greatest *othé* n’as but by Seint Loy” (*Chaucer*),

is equivalent to: her greatest *of oathes*, the *e* of *othé* being = A.S. gen. plur. *a*, *otha* of oathes. In

“The drought of March had perced to the *roté*” (*Chaucer*),

*roté* = dat. sing. of *rot* = root, here, however, with the addition of the dat. particle *to*.

“Pouré menné cotes” (*Piers Ploughman’s Vision*),

stands for “*poor mens’ cots*”, and

“her horsé knave” (*Gower’s Confessio Amantis*),

for their horse’s groom. The *adverbial* force of the final *e* seems to occur only in the *positive* degree, *swifté* = swiftly, *firsté* = firstly.

“And in a cloth of gold that *brighté* shone” (*Chaucer*),

where *brighté* = *brightly*. This adverbial form explains the constant use, in the most classic writers, of what appears to be the adjective instead of the adverb. It is, in reality, the Old English adverb, with the final *e* first dropped in pronunciation, and then in writing.

“Soft went the music the soft air along” (*Keats*).

In the superlative the adverb terminated in *-est* simply, as in A.S. *swifstost* and *swiftest* = Old English *swiftest* = modern *swiftliest*. So *brightest* = *brightliest*, adv.; but *brighteste* =

*brightest*, adj. The final *e* mute is believed now, for the first time, to have been extensively employed by those of the Norman school of writing as an orthographic expedient to lengthen the preceding vowel. This purpose was effected in A.S. times by the *accent*; but this having been abolished with the old alphabet, a new method was required: A.S. *gôd*=Old English *gode*=good; *fûl*=*fole*=foul; *gêa*=*gea*=gees; *blôd*=*blode*=blood; *hûs*=*hose*=house; *fôt*=*fote*=foot; *lif*=*life*=life, etc. From these examples it appears that, if we suppose the pronunciation of an A.S. accented vowel to be uniform, as great a change has taken place in the pronunciation of the language as in its orthographic system (see sec. IV. §. 12).

5. The total disappearance of the final *e* syllabic, or rather of its functions (to include both the written and spoken language), constitutes, perhaps, the greatest, though not the most striking, difference between Middle and Modern English. Other grammatical forms, peculiar to this period, were the following:

In the *noun* the possessive and plural endings were alike, as now, but often made a complete syllable, as *thingés*=*thing's* and *things*, *werkés*=*works*, *banke's*, *Godde's* sake, *wordé's*, *frere's*. Attention to this is of great assistance in reading Chaucer:

“But preacheth not as frerés don in Lent  
To make us for our oldé sinnés weep”,

when read as here accented, are two perfect heroic lines. A fuller plural in *-is* sometimes occurs: *to make bakes*, *songis*, and *ditis* (Chaucer). Many plurals in *en* were also retained, some of which have survived to our time: *shoon*, *eyen*, *bischopen*, *eldren*, *arwen*, *doghtren*, *sustren*, *unclen*, *treen*, *hosen*, *chicken* (?), *oxen*, *toen*, *tone*, and *ton*. The syllable in A.S. was *an*, the universal pl. of nouns of the simple order: *eagan*=*eyen*=eyes, *tan*=*toen*=toes; but we shall see that the greater number of the Old English plurals in *-en* are not accounted for by reference to this A.S. declension (sec. VI., §. 9).

In the *pronoun*, the forms *I*, *ich*, and *iche* occur. It is not the only instance of a mixture of archaic and modern

forms, the middle state naturally participating of, and connecting the stages immediately preceding and following it. So *hi* and *they*, *ye* and *you*, the latter nearly always accusative. This distinction may have caused it subsequently to be used singularly in the spoken language: *hir*, *hire* and *their*, *hire* and *her*, *hire* being invariably a monosyllable; *hem* (as modern *'em*) and *them* (see sec. VI., §. 10).

In the *verb*, the infinitive was in *-en*, with a tendency to drop the *n*, eliding the final *e* before a vowel. We find *to haen*=*to han*=*to havé*=*to hav'(e)*, *specan*=*speken*=*speké*, *maken*=*maké* and (in the last line cited) *mak'(e)*. What was at first done for euphony sake became later on the universal practice in the *spoken* language, sometimes without further change, sometimes with a compensative lengthening of the root vowel. We say *hāv(e)*, *gīv(e)*, *lōv(e)*, but *tāk(e)*, *māk(e)*, *dō* (for *dōn*), *bē* (for *bēn*).

The *past participle*, according to the writer's fancy or convenience, drops the old A.S. suffix *ge*, now softened into *y*: *ytaught*, *ymaked*, *ybroken*, *ysought*, *ysowen*, *ycleped*, but also *cleped*, *maked*, etc. It is common enough in Spenser, who was fond of archaic forms: *ydrad*=*dreaded*, *ypight*=*fixed*, *ywrote*, *ybore*, *ytold*, etc.; and even in so late a writer as Thomson:

"Yet all these sounds *yblent* inclined all to sleep"—

"But these his talents were *yburied stark*"—

"*ypricked deep*"—"from Heaven this life *ysprung*"—"yborn to rise", etc., in the *Castle of Indolence*.

6. The *present indicative* is now generally sing., *lové*, *lovest*, *loveth*; plural, *we*, *ye*, *they loven*, instead of *loveth*, as in Early English (see last sec., §. 6). Trevisa, the translator of Higden's *Polychronicon* (1385), still retains the old form: "other naciouns *beth*"=ben=be=are; "thei *cunneth*"=connen=can; thei *lerneth*, *leveth*, *haveth*, etc. This is, of course, the proper pl. ending from A.S. *að*=*ath*=*eth*, *we bringað*=*we bringath*=*we bringeth*. How the infinitive *-en*, *bringen*, *singen*, *loven*, was now substituted for it has not been explained. The modern Greeks, in much the same way, say *ivai* for *iori*. The practice prevailed very generally, Ben Jonson tells us in his *English Grammar*,

“till about the reign of Henry VIII. . . thus *loven, sayen, complainen*. But now (whatsoever is the cause) it hath quite grown out of use, and that other so generally prevailed, that I dare not presume to set this afoot again, albeit (to tell you my opinion) I am persuaded that the lack thereof, well considered, will be found a great blemish in our tongue. For seeing *time* and *person* be, as it were, the right and left hand of a verb, what can the maiming bring else but a lameness to the whole body?” He was not aware that this *lameness* already existed in A.S. times, and is the reason why our first pers. sing. and the plural are alike. They said *ic lufige* and *lufige we*, as well as *we lufiað*, *I love, we love*; *ic bærne, we, ge, hi bærnað*, and *bærne, we, ge, hi, I, we, you, they burn*. For a similar reason the third per. sing. and the pl. were identical in *Early English*: *he loveth, we loveth*. The A.S. *að* and *ð* of the third pers., and *iað* and *að* pl. were in both cases softened into *ath* and then *eth*: *he bærnð, we bærnað*; *he lufað, we lufiað*, becoming *he bernath, we bernath, he burneth, we burneth*; *he, we lovath and loveth*, etc. Perhaps this may account for the substitution in *Middle English* of the infinitive *en* in the plural, to distinguish it from the third sing.: *he burneth, we burnen*. As a synthetic language decays, certain grammatical forms are very liable to get confused, thus occasioning a further change to avoid ambiguity. The Latin imperfect *amabam* becoming *amava* and *amavo* in Italian, the future *amabo*, when softened also into *amavo*, was no longer distinguishable from it. This identity necessitated some new form for one or other of these tenses, and actually originated the modern Italian future system: *amare ho=amar-o=amerò, amare hai=amar-ai=amerai, amare ha=amar-a=amerà*, etc., as we say sometimes, *I have to do so* and *so*, instead of *I must* or *shall*.

7. The *past tense* makes both *ede* and *ed*, *edest* and *edst*, *ede* and *ed* in the sing., *ed* and *eden* in the pl., *ed* being always a full syllable: *I and he lovédé and lovéd, thou lovédést and lovédst*; *we, ye, they lovéd and lovéden*, and occasionally *lovedeth*, against all analogy, as the A.S. form is: *ic and he lufode, þu lufodest*; *we, ge, hi lufoden and lufedon*, never *lufodað*. Instances of the double form are



they *cried* and *crieden*, *were* and *weren*, *mote* and *moten* (*must*), *might* and *mighten*: "his ton toteden out" (his toes peeped out); "his hosen overhongen", etc. (*Piers Ploughman's Creed*).

The imperative second pers. sing. and pl. is generally in *eth* and *th*, from the Early English: *lovath ye*=*loveth ye*, and sometimes *love ye*.

"Now telleth ye, sire monk, if that ye conne" (*Chaucer*).

"Riseth up, sir preest, and stondeþ by me" (*Ditto*).

*Beth still*=*be still*, *witteth*=*know ye*, *goth*=*go ye*, *taketh*=*take ye*, *cometh*=*come ye*, etc. No trace remains of the *subjunctive* or *gerund*. *To have* was conjugated in accordance with the foregoing forms: indicative pres., *I have*, thou *hapest* and *hast*, he *haveth* and *hath*; plur. *haven*, *haen* and *han*; past, *I* and he *hadde*, thou *haddest*; plur. *hadden*; infinitive, *to haven*, *to haen* and *to han*; imperative, *haveth*, *haveth ye*. *To be* made: *am*, *art*, *is*; plur. *aren* and *ben*, *weren* and *were*; imperative, *beth*; inf. *to ben*. The other auxiliaries varied considerably: *may*, *mow*, plur. *mowen*; past, *mighte*, *might*, *moughte*; plur. *mighten*, *moughten*; *can*, *con*; plur. *connen*, *conne*; past, *coude*, *couden*, *couthen*. The *l* was introduced later on into this tense *could*, by apparent analogy with *would*, *should*, and disregard of its true origin. *Will*, *wil*, *wol*, *willen*, *wollen*; past, *wolde*, *wolden*. *Shal*, *shall*, plur. *shull*; past, *shulde*, *shulden*. These two verbs were now universally used as they are at present, with the infinitive to form the future. As *shall* originally implied *obligation*, it had a natural reference to future time; and as the obligation we impose on *ourselves* is lighter than that we impose on others, it must clearly have a stronger meaning in the second and third person than in the first: *I shall go*=*I must go* (originally), *thou shalt not go*=*thou must not go*. Again, as *will* meant *resolution*, *determination*, it also had reference to future time (cf. modern Greek *θελω αγαπην*=*αγαπησω*); and as the resolution we form for ourselves must necessarily be stronger than that we announce of others, *will*, in the first person, must be more emphatic than in the second and third, *I will go* than *thou wilt go*, etc. Here is the whole mystery explained by reference to the original meaning of these words: *scealan*=*to owe* a thing,

*willan* = to will a thing. All these verbs were used in A.S. as auxiliaries always with the *infinitive*, never with the *gerund*, except in a passive sense, as: *is eðc tó wítanne* = it is also to be known; *ic sceal macian*, not: *ic sceal tó macigenne* (*I shall make*); *we sceolon geclænsian* = we must cleanse; *beón wolde* = would be; *nú mage we secgan* = now may we say; *heð hit ne mæg his gewittes bereáfian* = she cannot bereave it of its wits. The *gerund*, we have seen, was a sort of dative case of the infinitive, with the particle *tó* always prefixed: *tó lufigenne*, to *habbenne*, *tó lærenne* (*teach*); *tó lybbenne*. This particle never was used with the *proper infinitive*: *lufian*, not *tó lufian*, *habban*, *læran*, *lybban*; consequently it cannot be employed in Modern English with the auxiliaries: *I may teach*, not *I may to teach*, *we can say*, *they should love*, etc. Such expressions, therefore, are not different *moods* of the verb, any more than would be the corresponding A.S. *ic mæg læran*, etc. In them alone do we find traces of a real infinitive, simply because the A.S. auxiliaries governed the verb in the infinitive mood; all others take the particle *tó*, which is not the sign of the *infinitive proper*, but of its dative case or *gerund*. This statement removes all moods, except the *indicative*, from the language, or rather from our grammars. In the modern language no other ever existed. In order to avoid repetition in the next section, the grammar of this period has been treated as well with reference to the modern as to the previous stages of the language.

8. In the year 1362, 36th of Edward III., it was enacted by statute that the English *might be* now substituted for the Norman tongue, hitherto employed exclusively in all public acts and judicial proceedings. "The proceedings were all written, as indeed all public proceedings were, in Norman or Law French, and even the arguments of the counsel and the decisions of the court were in the same barbarous dialect. This continued till the reign of Edward III., who having employed his arms successfully in subduing the crown of France, thought it unbecoming the dignity of the victors to use any longer the language of a vanquished country. By a statute, therefore, passed in the 36th year of his reign (1362), it was enacted that for the future all pleas *should be* pleaded, shown, defended,

answered, debated, and judged in the English tongue, but be entered and enrolled in Latin" (*Blackstone*, iii. 21), where the great lawyer exhibits more zeal and patriotic feeling than historic accuracy. It appears that the decree referred to only so far tolerated the E. language as to *allow* it to be used in the courts, not by any means to the exclusion of the rival tongue. Of course this was a great step, and quite sufficient to secure the ultimate ascendancy of the language of the masses. In fact the statute itself was necessitated by the growing importance of the latter, rather than dictated by jealousy of the former. At the same time it was decreed that no clergyman, ignorant of English, should be promoted to any preferment or benefice, because the great body of the people spoke no other. This is the first legal recognition of English as the language of the country, and is a great landmark in its history. It points out the time when French had ceased to be spoken outside the court and the upper house, and when the native speech had recovered its ascendancy. French had been falling off since the beginning of the century, and when, owing to the separation of England from the mainland, it became a corrupt dialect, very different from that spoken in Paris, it ceased to be any longer used in literature. Chaucer, in several places, sneers at the French current in the country in his time, and ridicules all who still endeavoured to employ it in conversation or writing. The Prioress in the *Canterbury Tales* spoke French fluently enough, but

"After the scole of Stratford atté Bowe,  
For Frenche of Paris was to hire unknowe".

And in the prologue to his *Testament of Love* he says: "Certes, there ben some that speke thyr poysy mater in French, of whyche speeche the Frenche men have as good a fantasye as we have in hearing of Frenche mennes Englishe". Further on he recommends the *clerks*, or clergy, to "endyten in Latyn, for they have the propertye in science and the knowinge in that facultye, and lette Frenche men in theyr Frenche also endyte theyr queynt termes, for it is kyndly (natural) to theyr mouthes; and

lette us shewe our fantasyes in such wordes *as we learned of our dames tonge*". It is not a little remarkable that his contemporary, Gower (1324—1408), composed in all three of these languages. His *Vox Clamantis*, which has never been printed, is in *Latin*; his *Speculum Meditantis*, now lost, together with fifty *balades*, or sonnets, was in *French*; and his *Confessio Amantis*, his best known work, is in *English*. He even excuses himself for any mistakes he may have committed in his French compositions, on the plea that he wrote in a foreign idiom:—

" Et si ieo n'ai de François la faconde,  
Pardonez moi qe ieo de ceo forsvoie.  
Jeo sui Englois".

He was probably the last Englishman that employed either Latin or French in any serious *literary* work. English remained ever after without a rival in the world of letters.

9. And yet not till this time was its vocabulary affected to any extent by Normanisms. French was for 300 years (1066—1362) politically the language of the country, spoken and written almost exclusively by the upper classes, and alone used as a medium of instruction. "Children in scole, agenes the usage and maner of alle other naciouns, beth compelled for to leve her owne language, and for to constrewe her lessouns and her thingis *a Frensche*, and haveth siththe (since) that the Normans come first into England. Also gentil mennes children beth ytaught for to speke *Frensche* from the time that thei beth rokked in her cradel, and kunneth speke and playe with a childes brooche. And uplondish men wol likne hem self to gentil men, and fondeth with grete bisynesse for to speke *Frensche*, for to be the more ytold of" (*Trevisa's Higden*, 1385). Yet during these 300 years it failed to produce any perceptible effect on the English tongue; none at all, either then or afterwards, on its *structure*, every French word introduced conforming itself ultimately to the English standard: *complainen*, *compell-ed*, *apayr-ing* (*disparaying*); this is the *testimon-ing* of Ion. Such forms as *cry-and*, *ples-and*, *resound-and*, *inclin-and*, are not the



newly adopted language, while they were wholly ignorant of A.S., consequently when the English they were acquainted with failed to supply proper terms for abstract, scientific, and refined notions, they were compelled to fall back on the Norman, and introduce such words borrowed from that language freely into their writings. It was, therefore, the adoption of English in literature by the Anglo-Norman portion of the population, that chiefly occasioned the great influx of French words which now took place. To the same circumstance is also to be attributed the universal practice of drawing on foreign sources, adopted by all subsequent writers in the formation of such new terms as they required. They could only take them from those languages they were acquainted with; and as A.S. continued ever after to be neglected and forgotten, and French, after the present age, to be ignored, they naturally had recourse later on to the classic tongues for their supplies. This view will be confirmed by reference to the relative position maintained for the last 700 years by the English and Irish languages in this country. The latter has ceased to be cultivated, has become corrupt and considerably modified in its structure, but it has remained throughout untainted by any mixture of the former, still bearing the same relation to it that Saxon did to the Norman for the first 300 years after the Conquest. This relation ceased in England, and was kept up in Ireland, because there the native element ultimately prevailed, here it has hitherto failed to do so. The Anglo-Irish, therefore, continuing to look upon the natives as a conquered race, never adopted their language in literature, as the Anglo-Normans did the English. But let us suppose the case of Ireland recovering its freedom, say during the reign of Elizabeth, as the Anglo-Normans were cut off from the Continent during the reign of John. The two races would have necessarily blended in the course of a few generations, the term "Wilde Irish" would have ceased to be used as a reproach, as did in England the Norman expression "do you take me for an Englishman?" and for a certainty the language of the masses would have prevailed, and been recognized as the national speech of all classes.

But, as an inevitable consequence, when it came to be employed in literature by the Anglo-Irish, it would have been flooded with Anglicisms of every kind, resulting in a language bearing the same relation to the Old Irish as the English now does to A.S.: *structure* Celtic, *Vocabulary* Anglo-Irish, in one case; *structure* A.S., *Vocabulary* Anglo-Norman in the other.

## SPECIMENS.

11. Did any doubt remain that the first great inroad of Normanism was occasioned by writers whose original language was French, and who continued still to live in a French atmosphere, at the same time that they spoke and wrote in English, it would be removed by a glance at the literature of this period. A great deal, both in prose and verse, was composed, especially between the years 1350 and 1400. The authors of *Piers Ploughman's Vision* and *Creed*—Lawrence Minot, Trevisa, Wickliff, Mandeville, Barbour, Chaucer, and Gower—were all contemporary or nearly so, and a comparison of their works would seem to imply that the literary world at the time was divided between two factions, the *Saxon* and the *Norman*. At least this is the only way we can explain the fact, that while all wrote in English, some employed French to an almost unlimited extent, and others excluded it, as far as it was now possible, from their compositions. Robert or William Langland, or whoever is the author of the *Vision*, is the best representative of the *Saxon*, Chaucer of the *Norman* faction. The former was, evidently, a pure native, the later was actually related to the Norman aristocracy. The other writers lie between these extremes, inclining more one way than the other, according to their Saxon or Norman tendencies. Thus Wickliff, who writes in a spirit of hostility to the Court, the aristocracy, and the High Church, is considerably less affected by Normanisms, than Mandeville, who translates his own work out of Latin and French, and “agen out of French into English, that every man of my nation may understand it”. The few specimens we have room for will help to illustrate this view of the *vocabulary*, as well as the grammatical peculiarities explained above.

12. William Langland's *Visio Willielmi de Petro Ploughman*, or *Piers Ploughman's Vision*, written about 1362, is a satirical allegory, somewhat resembling Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, but in verse. It consists of 14,696 short lines, distributed into twenty sections, each containing a distinct vision. The author wrote avowedly for the people, and decidedly represents a Saxon school of literature, not only in his language, but in his poetic system. Rhyme was a Norman innovation; he rejects it, and adheres to the A.S. *alliterative* measure already explained. His work is the most perfect alliterative poem extant, and, except the *Creed*, is the last in which alliteration is practised systematically. The rhythm is rather *accentual* than syllabic, the lines being divided into couplets, with *two accented* syllables in the first, and *one* in the second, beginning with the same letter. The poem opens thus:—

“In a sómer sêson,  
 Whan sófte was the sonne,  
 I shóop me into shroudes (I clothed myself)  
 As I a *sheep* weere (shepherd),  
 In hábite as an héremite  
 Unhóly of werkes,  
 Went wide in this wórlð  
 Wóndres to hère;  
 Ac (and) on a Máy mórwenyng  
 On Málverne hilles  
 Me befél a fêrly (a wonder)  
 Of fáyrre me thaghte”.

In this passage there are only two Norman words: *habite* and *heremite*. *Piers Ploughman's Creed* is a short satirical poem of 1697 lines, written by an unknown hand, in imitation of the foregoing, and though considerably more recent (about 1400), is quite as antique in style and structure. Its retention of forms, already rejected by Chaucer and his school, shows that great efforts were made to preserve all the inflexions of the last period by the opposite party: wicked folk *betraieth*, and *begileth* hem of her good; and gif *thei* couthen *her* other on Christ leveden; but the foles *foundeden* himself; *thei precheth* and *prechen*, *lurketh* and *lurken*; seyne that *her sustren thei ben* that *sogurneth* aboute; *we sheweth* and *we haven here made*; *we buildeth*. But all



to no purpose. These compositions could not pretend to compete with the masterpieces of the great father of English poetry, which became universally popular with both parties, and caused his school ultimately to prevail. Chaucer (1328-1400) was a most voluminous writer; the poetic portion of his great work, the *Canterbury Tales*, though unfinished, consisting alone of over 17,000 lines; the *Romaunt of the Rose*, of nearly 8,000, etc. He is Norman in his poetic system as well as in his language, having introduced the Italian endecasillabo, which became, reduced by a syllable, the English heroic measure: syllabic and rhyming, as opposed to the old system, *alliterative* and *accentual*, *accent* being, however, equally and alone *essential* to both. The opening of the *Canterbury Tales*, as accented by Tyrwhitt, will illustrate his grammar, vocabulary, and metre:—

- (1) " Whanné that *April* with his shoures sôte (*sweet*) .
- (2) The droughte of *Márch* hath *pérce*d tó the rôte,
- (3) And báthed évery *veine* in swíche *licour*,
- (4) Of wlíche *vertúe* engéndred is the *flour*;
- (5) Whan *Zéphirus* eke with his sôte bréthe
- (6) *Enspíred* háth in évery hólt and héthe
- (7) The *téndre* cróppe, and the yóng *sónne* (*sun*),
- (8) Háth in the Rám his hálfte *cours* yrónné,
- (9) And smále *foúies* máken *melodie*
- (10) That slépen álle night with ópen éye
- (11) So príketh hem *natúre* in hír *coráges*;
- (12) Than lóngen fólk to gón on *pílgřimáges*.
- (13) And *pálmeres* fór to séken *stránde* stróndes
- (14) To sérve hálwes cóúthe in sóndry lóndes".

Here it is scarcely necessary to observe that *es* plur. *en*, inf. and plur. pres. *ed* past, final *e* generally, except when elided by a following vowel, should be pronounced as distinct syllables, thus: *shour-es* (in l. 1), *pérce-ed* (in 2), *mak-en* (in 9), *all-e* (in 10). Read so, all the verses except (3) and (4), are really endecasyllabic, the last syllable being always unaccented; *melodi-e* (in 9), *corág-es* (in 11), *pílgřimág-es* (in 12). Verse (3) may possibly be an instance of an endecasillabo sdrucciolo (see page 73), thus: and báth | ed é | verý | veine in | swíché | licour | . *Every* was usually written *everich*, clearly three syllables. Verse (4) consisting of ten syllables strictly (endecasillabo tronco), represents the metre afterwards universally adopted. *Eke*

(in 5) is an instance of the employment of *e* mute to lengthen the preceding vowel (see p. 66). *Pálmeres* (in 13) is a dissyllable, either *palm'res* or *palmer's*. It shows how the shifting back of the accent tends to weaken inflexional endings, and thus to corrupt synthetic languages (see p. 48). All the words in *Italics* in this passage are foreign, and represent not more than the average proportion to be found in the writings of Chaucer. There may be some exaggeration in attributing the great influx of Norman words to him, but there can be no doubt that the fact of his having been the greatest genius of the age, gave, perhaps, undue weight to the Norman school, to which he belonged, and that his influence introduced the practice of borrowing words indiscriminately from foreign tongues. He himself has appropriated a vast number, which have not been retained; and this is true of all his followers. Thus *mel*=honey, *roy*=king, *misericorde*=mercy, *creansur*=creditor, *baine*=bath, *esperance*=hope, and others pointed out by Trench (*English Past and Present*). At the same time there is a strange mixture of extreme French and Saxon both in him and in his great admirer, Spenser, which shows that it is writers of the first order who principally enrich and expand the language they employ as the means of giving expression to their boundless thought and imagination. They draw largely upon every available source, for they, more than any others, feel how true it is that more ideas pass through the busy brain of man, than all language could supply equivalent terms for.

13. During the Early English Period, no *prose* was written. While a language is shifting and in a rapid state of transition, it may be very convenient for the poet, by supplying him with a multiplicity of forms, old and new, to suit the exigencies of the metre; but its unsettled state must be felt to be an incumbrance and exceedingly perplexing wherever precision is an object. Hence the earliest compositions amongst all nations are poetic, and none other are possible until the language has acquired a certain consistency. English has now reached this state, consequently prose works become frequent enough. The most important and the earliest in the language are Sir

John Mandeville's Travels. His style, though he is somewhat anterior to Chaucer (died in Liege, 1371), is exceedingly flowing, so much so that it is probable a good deal of prose was written about the same time. In the following passage from the introduction he gives an account of himself and of his work :—

“ And for als moche as it is long time *passed* that there was no *general passage* ne *vyage* over the sea, and many men *desiren* for to hear speke of the Holy Land, and han thereof great *solace* and *comfort*, I, John Mandeville, knight, all be it I be not worthy, that was born in England, in the town of St. Albans, *passed* the sea in the year of our Lord J. C., 1322, in the day of St. Michael, and hitherto have ben longtime over the sea and have seen and gone through many *diverse* londs, and many *provinces*, and kingdoms, and *isles*, and have *passed* through Tartary, Persie, Ermonie (Armenia). . . . And ye shull understand that I have put this book out of Latin into French, and *translated* it agen out of French into English, that every man of my *nacion* may understand”. The fourteen words in *Italics* are Norman.

Other prose writers were Chaucer, Trevisa, and Wicliff. Trevisa, a canon of Westbury in Wilts, finished, in the year 1387, a complete Catholic version of the Old and New Testament, the subsequent loss or disappearance of which has occasioned the erroneous impression that Wicliff's (1383) was the only complete translation that preceded the Reformation. Caxton knew of its existence, and mentions it a hundred years after in the preface to his edition of Trevisa's *Polychronicon*. The following extract from the latter work alludes to the great diversity in the *spoken* language during the fourteenth century :—

“ Hit semeth a grete wonder that Englyssmen have so grete *dyversytie* on their owin langage in sowne (sound) and in spekyn of it, which is all in one ilonde. . . . Some use straunge, wlaſſing, chytryng, harring, garryng, and grysbityng. The language of the Northumbres, and specyally at Yorke, is so sharpe, slytting, frotyng, and unshape, that we sothern men maye unneeth understande that langage”.

In the next passage he informs us that English was substituted for French in schools, as a medium of instruction, about the year 1385:—

“This maner was myche yused to fore the first moreyn (murrain), and is siththe (since) some dele ychaungide; for John Cornwaile, a maistre of grammer, chaungide the lore in grammer scole, and construction of Frensch into Englisch, and Richard Pencriche lerned that maner teching of him, and other men of Pencriche. So that now, the zere of our Lord *a thousand, thre hundred, foure score and fyte*, of the seconde King Rychard, after the Conquest nyne, in alle the gramer scoles of Englund children leveth Frensch, and construeth and lerneth an Englisch, and haveth thereby avauntage in oon side and desavauntage in another”.

14. The greatest poet of the age, next to Chaucer, was a Scotchman, his contemporary, John Barbour, Archdeacon of Aberdeen (1320—1395). He is the author of the *Bruce*, a poem of about 12,500 lines, comprising the history of Scotland between the years 1286 and 1330. It is generally admitted that he wrote in the language at the time spoken in the Lowlands, yet a few lines from the introduction will suffice to show that it is very good *English*, more intelligible than that of Chaucer:—

Stories to read are delitable,  
Suppose that they be naught but fable;  
Then suld stories that suthfast were,  
An they war said on gud manere,  
Have double pleasance in hearing.  
The first pleasance is the carping (narrating),  
And the tother the suthfastness,  
That shaws the thing right as it wes;  
And such things that are *likand* (agreeable)  
Till (to) mannes hearing are pleasand.

Barbour never supposes that he is writing in any other language than *English*. He and his successors, Dunbar and Sydney, never call it by any other name, *Scotch* then and later on still implying the Gaelic or Irish Keltic of the Highlands. More than a hundred years after Barbour, Gawin Douglas (1496—1550), Bishop of Dunkeld, translated the *Æneid*. He also used the language current in the Lowlands in his time; but that it has already ceased

to be English will be evident from the following passage (b. vii., 563, etc.—“*Est locus, Italie in medio sub montibus altis*”, etc.):—

“Amyddis Itale, under the hills law,  
Thare standis ane famous stede wele  
beknaw,  
That for his brute is namyt in mony  
land,  
The vale Amsanctus hate, on ather  
hand

Quham the sydis of ane thik wod of  
tre,  
Closis all derne with skuggy bewishie;  
Ane rowstand burn amydwart thereof  
rynnis,  
Runland and soundand on the craggy  
qubynnys”.

This is Scotch in the modern sense of the word, and is so called. The earliest inhabitants of the Lowlands we are acquainted with were the Picts. To these some have traced the Saxon spoken in the country from time immemorial. But the Picts, like all the other primitive inhabitants of the island, were almost certainly Kelts; and even if we suppose them Teutonic, we cannot conceive the corruption of their original Germanic speech resulting in the fourteenth century in a language *identical* with the English corruption of A.S. The *same* language, Latin, has been differently corrupted in Italy, France, Wallachia. Others have derived it from Scandinavian settlers, who for thirty years in the eleventh century maintained a regular kingdom in the East of Scotland. But a *Norse* language never could become an A.S. dialect. The simple explanation is conveyed in the statement that the *Angles* peopled Britain from the Thames to the Clyde. The Northumbrian kingdom ruled the Lothians, and kept the Angle population united in one nation. At the Conquest, Angles and Saxons poured into Scotland to escape the sword of the invaders. Constant intercourse was maintained between them and those of England throughout the Norman rule, which caused the language of the two countries, originally one, to continue identical, even through a stage of transition (Semi-Saxon and Early English Periods) resulting in the Middle English of the fourteenth century, common to both. But a hundred years later they are no longer the same; one is now *English*, the other *Scotch*. Of the two, this seems the greater difficulty; it has in fact occasioned the first, of origin, which we have endeavoured to remove. It may be stated thus: Barbour (fourteenth century), is more English than Douglas (sixteenth), Douglas than

portions of Burns (eighteenth). One thing is clear: the history of the Scotch language begins where that of the English properly ceases (1450, or thereabouts), and the explanation seems to be in its characteristic name of *broad*. Any difference which may have existed from the beginning between the Angle or northern, and the Saxon or southern speech, would be more observable in Scotland than elsewhere. The chief difference was one rather of *pronunciation* than of *idiom*. The northern, as opposed to the southern dialect, is always represented as characterized by a *broad, drawling* utterance, and a consequent preference for the open vowels *o, a*, instead of *e, i*. This has been attributed to *Scandinavian* influence. The *Angles* brought the germs of it from the continent, for they came from countries bordering on the *Scandinavian* frontier. It was further developed in the North of England by the Danish settlers in the tenth and eleventh centuries, and still more so in Scotland, by the Norse occupiers of the eastern coast in the eleventh century. The tendency would be checked by an intimate union with the south. Accordingly, it is scarcely perceptible in literature, so long as that union was maintained; and had Edward II. triumphed at Bannockburn, it would have ultimately disappeared. But if left to itself, and freed from foreign influence, it would work itself out to its legitimate consequences in accordance with a law inherent in all speech. After the war of independence, the two nations were completely isolated, the interests of Scotland inclining it to keep up a close connection with France. Hence the Scottish dialect now began to diverge from the English standard, and it fell off so rapidly that, had the crown of Scotland continued disunited from that of England, it would, in course of time, have been moulded into a distinct national language. But the accession of James VI. to the throne of England, together with the very great influence of the southern literature before that event, again interfered, and prevented it from assuming more than a peculiar provincial form. Knox, living in England, wrote in English, and others, like Buchanan, feeling that the national speech was becoming every day more of a *patois*, composed in Latin. Thus the

independent literature, created and partially developed by the successors of Barbour, Wyntoun, Blind Harry, Lyndsay, Dunbar, Douglas, and others, was not sustained. The *Complaynt of Scotland*, by an unknown hand, in 1548, was the first and almost the last original prose work in the Scottish language. Verse, from incidental causes, still struggled on into the eighteenth century; but the general *spread of English* education will prevent Burns from having any successor, and will, perhaps, in a short time cause all dialectical variety to disappear even from the spoken language.

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#### QUESTIONS.

1. What is the extent of the Middle English period? When does it properly cease?

2. Chaucer says: "Methoughten", and "methought"; explain from this the essential difference between the structure of Middle and Early English.

3. When may final *e* in Middle English constitute a syllable? Is Chaucer's metre *syllabic*, or only *accentual*?

4. When did final *e* *French* cease to be pronounced? How were French words gradually conformed to the genius of the English language? What old grammatical endings does final *e* represent? Final *e* adverbial explains the modern use of what appears to be the *adjective* for the *adverb*?

5. Difference between *possessive* case and *plural* Middle and Modern? two forms of the infinitive? and of the past part.?

6. How did *lov-eth* come to be pl. in Early, and sing. in Middle E.? What is the Middle E. pl. present tense? Why is the pl. *we love*, the same as first sing. I love, in Modern E.?

7. The past tense had two forms? What was the second pers. imperative? Why is *could*, from *can*, written with an *l*? Original force of *shall* and *will*? It explains their present apparently inconsistent use? In what modern idioms do we find traces of the *true infinitive*? Is "*I can love*" a mood?

8. What decree was issued in the reign of Edward III. affecting the language? When did French and Latin cease to be employed in literature?

9. When was English first seriously affected by Normanisms? Was it so affected in its structure?

10. Account for the late influx of French words. To what class of the population do you attribute it?

11. This view is strengthened by the state of the literature during this period?

12. Give an account of *Piers Ploughman's Vision*, its language and poetic system, as opposed to those of Chaucer. Scan the Chaucerian couplet:

And smalle foules maken melodie,  
That alepen alle night with open eye.

Also, the line

And palmeres for to seken strange strondes.

13. Who were the principal prose writers of this period? Why is prose generally subsequent to verse? Was Wickliff's the only complete version of Scripture that was now made? Was the spoken language uniform at this time? When was English substituted for French in schools?

14. What is the origin of the Scottish dialect? Account for its identity with English in the fourteenth century, and for its subsequent divergence.

## SECTION VI.

(1450).

Modern English Period—Grammar—its analytic character—contrast—vocabulary—loss and gain—style—present position—future prospects—conclusion.

1. The middle English period is usually protracted to the beginning of the sixteenth century, the *History of Richard III.*, by Sir Thomas More (1483-1535), being considered "the first example of good English language, pure and perspicuous, well chosen, without vulgarisms or pedantry"—*Hallam*. Here he is evidently speaking of the style rather than of the structure of the language, for, elsewhere, he observes: "In following the line of our writers, both in verse and prose, we find the old, obsolete English to have gone out of use about the accession of Edward IV. (1461). . . . . In the Paston letters, in Harding, the metrical chronicler, or in Sir John Fortescue's discourse on the difference between an absolute and a limited monarchy, he finds scarce any difficulty; antiquated words and forms of termination frequently occur; but *he is hardly sensible* that he reads these books much less fluently than those of modern times"—*Lit. of Europe*.



The following extract, in the original spelling, from the work of Fortescue here cited, will convince us that the only difference between the language he uses and the present, is one of form, and not of structure, orthographical rather than grammatical, both being the same in all essentials. Fortescue, Chief Justice of the King's Bench under Henry VI., flourished between the years 1430 and 1470. Ours is an account of the essential changes the language has undergone from time to time. It must, therefore, close, when those are complete, about 1450. "It is cowardise and lack of hartes and corage, that kepith the Frenchmen from rysing, and not povertie; which corage no Frenche man hath like to the English man. It hath ben often seen in Englonde that 3 or 4 thefes, for povertie, hath sett upon 7 or 8 true men, and robbyd them al. But it hath not ben seen in Fraunce that 7 or 8 thefes have ben hardy to robbe 3 or 4 true men. Wherefore it is right seld (*seldom*) that French men be hangyd for robberye, for that they have no hertys to do so terryble an acte. There be therfor mo men hangyd in Englonde, in a yere, for robberye and manslaughter, than ther be hangid in Fraunce for such cause of crime in 7 yers". The little importance that can be attached to the spelling even of inflexional forms is shown by the double form of the past of *hang* in this passage: *hangyd*, *hangid*; and of the pl. ending: *hartes* and *hertis*. No one can read the whole passage without feeling quite satisfied that the *final e* of the last stage, has already disappeared as a distinct syllable. This single change was sufficient to impart a new and modern air to the language.

2. The only English poet, deserving of the name, that connects Chaucer (1328–1400) with the first great modern English poet, Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey (1516–1547), is John Lydgate, a monk of Bury, who flourished about 1430. He therefore belongs, in point of time, rather to the close of the last period; notwithstanding which, and the fact that he formed his style on the school of Chaucer, his language is as modern as that of Fortescue. In the appended extract from his *Destruction of Troy*, it will be seen that he retains or rejects the *final e* syllabic according to the requirements of the metre:

"Where from my horse I did alight as fast  
 And on the bow aloft his *reine* cast.  
 So faint and mate of weariness I was,  
 That I me laid adown upon the grass,  
 Upon a *brinke* shortly for to tell,  
 Beside the river of a crystal well :  
 And the water, as I *reherse* can,  
 Like *quicke* silver in his streams y-ran,  
 Of which the gravel and the brighte stone,  
 As any gold, against the sun y-shone".

This is surely modern English, far more so than the language of Spenser, and quite as much as some of Thomson:

'But these I *passen* by, with nameless numbers moe'.  
 'And much they moralized as thus *yfere they yode*'.  
 'Withouten that wold come a heavier bale', etc.

*Castle of Indolence.*

*Yfere they yode*=together they went, is Semi-Saxon for A.S. *geferan hi eodon*.

An earlier and a greater poet than Lydgate was King James I. of Scotland, whose language must be considered rather English than Scotch, slightly tintured, however, with the peculiarities of that dialect, which were now beginning to develop themselves. He was taken prisoner in his youth by Henry IV., and detained in England for nineteen years, between 1405 and 1424. During this period he composed the only poem that can be safely ascribed to him, *The King's Quhair*, or Book, in which he describes the romantic attachment he formed for the daughter of the Earl of Somerset, whom he afterwards married. His style is so polished that his retention of the final *e* and full *is*=*es* pl., alone prevents his being included in the modern period :

"So thick the *boughis* and *leavis* green  
 Be-shaded all the alleys that there were,  
 And mids of every arbour might be seen  
 The *sharpe greené sweeté* juniper,  
 Growing so fair with branches here and there,  
 That as it seeméd to a lyf without,  
 The *boughis* spread the arbour all about.  
 And on the *smalle greené twistis* (twigs) sat  
 The little *sweeté* nightingale, and sung  
 So loud and clear, the *hymnis* consecrat  
 Of *Lovis* use, now soft, now loud among,

That all the gardens and the wallis rung  
Right of their song".

The Scottish ballad, *Edward Edward*, of uncertain date, but probably a hundred years more recent than this, will serve to illustrate what was said in the last section of the rapid growth of this dialect, at the very time English was becoming a settled language :

"Quhy dois zour brand sae drap wi' bluid,  
Edward, Edward?  
Quhy dois zour brand sae drap wi' bluid?  
And quhy sae sad gang zee, O?  
O, I hae killed my hauke sae guid,  
Mither, mither :  
O, I has killed my hank sae guid;  
And I had nae mair bot hee, O".

The ballad poetry of the time was chiefly composed in the Northumbrian dialect, the wandering minstrels being generally represented as north countrymen. Peculiarities, therefore, occasionally present themselves, which give it an antique, sometimes a Scotch, air ; but it is still perfectly modern in its structure :—

"Nethar in Ynglonde, Skottlonde, nar  
France,  
Nor for no man of a woman born,  
But an fortune be my chance,  
I dare met him on man for on  
(one).

Then bespayke a squyar off Northom-  
berlonde,  
Ric. Wytharynton was his nam ;  
It shall never be told in Sothe-Yng-  
londe, he says,  
To King Henry the Fourth for sham"  
(*Chevy Chase—reign of Henry IV.*).

3. Printing was invented about the year 1440, not earlier. Thirty years later, Caxton (1412–1491) translated and published on the continent Raoul le Fevre's *Recueil des Histoires de Troyes*, "whyche said translacion and werke", says the title, "was begonne in Brugis in 1468, and ended in the holy cyte of Colen, 19 Sept., 1471". In 1474, he issued at Westminster the first book printed in England, also a translation from the French : *The Game and Playe of the Chesse*. In 1482, he published Trevisa's translation of Higden's *Polychronicon*, continued by himself from 1357 to 1460, and modernized: "I, William Caxton, a simple person, have endeavoured me to writ first over all the said book of *Polychronicon*, and somewhat have changed

the rude and old English, that is to wit, certain wordes which, in these days, be neither used ne understood"—*Preface*. The concluding passage of this work, with the spelling restored, will illustrate his own style, which is certainly quainter and less polished than that of Fortescue, inclining more to middle than modern English, and participating more of the two than any other we know of: "For yf I coude have *founden moe* storyes, I wold have sette in *hit moo*; but the substaunce that I can fynde and knowe, I have shortly sette *hem* in this book, to *thentente* (the intent) that such *thynges* as have ben done *syth* the deth or ende of the sayd boke of *Polycronycon* shold be had in remembraunce, and not putte in oblyvyon ne forgetyng; prayenge all them that shall see this symple werke to pardone me of my symple and rude wrytyng. Ended the second day of Juyll the xxii yere of the regne of Kynge Edward the Fourth, and of the Incarnacion of oure Lord a thousand four honderd foure score and tweyne. *Fynysshed per Caxton*". The words in *Italies* are old English forms, but it is clear that in no single instance does final *e* any longer constitute a syllable. He says *foure* and *four*, *moo* and *moe*, *book* and *boke*; also *hem* and *them*, the *old* and *new* forms, with a disregard for precision remarkable in a man whose first duty should have been to aim at giving the language a settled and consistent character, both in its structure and orthography. That he was in this respect, whatever be the reason, behind his age, will be evident by comparing the foregoing extract with the following of Sir Thomas More, a few years later on (1480-1535):—

"Richarde, the third sonne, of whom we nowe entreate, was in witte and corage egall with either of them; in bodye and prowesse farre under them bothe, little of stature; ill-fetured of limmes, croke-backed, his left shoulder much higher than his right, hard-favoured of visage. He was malicious, wrathfull, envious, and from afore his birth ever frowarde", etc. Nor is his poetic language less pure, as may be seen by the opening lines of his elegy on Queen Elizabeth, wife of Henry VII., who died in 1503:—

"O ye that put your trust and confidence  
 In worldly joy and frayle prosperite,  
 That so lyve here as ye should never hence,  
 Remember death, and loke here uppon me,  
 Ensaumple, I thinke, there may no better be.  
 Yourself wotte well that in this realme was I  
 Your quene but late, and lo now here I lye".

4. From the foregoing specimens, we may safely conclude that the language, in its structure and *grammar*, was completely formed within the fifteenth century, and that the history of its *internal vicissitudes* is now at an end. The middle and modern periods are dovetailed one into the other by the names of Fortescue and Caxton. Fortescue (1450) is the first writer who can be called modern; Caxton (1480), the last who can be called old. Nor is it a little remarkable that the perfect formation of the English language was coincident with the introduction of the art of printing into the country. Within fifty years from the death of Chaucer (1400), the great bulk of inflexional forms, explained in the last section as peculiar to middle English, seem to have already disappeared. Since that time no further loss has been sustained. All the grammar, strictly speaking, which the language then possessed, it still retains, any change which is since then observable being only such as all spoken speech must be liable to, referring to matters of style, propriety of idiom and expression, and especially the vocabulary. It is obvious that some cause has been at work to check the tendency to *perfect analysis*. Literature would have always done a great deal, and retarded this result indefinitely. But it did not save the verbal and case-endings of the Chaucerian age even for a single generation; nor would it in all probability have ultimately preserved the few that seem now finally settled, had its influence not been more than doubled at first by the invention of printing, and subsequently increased tenfold by the general extension of this wonderful art. That literature alone would have been inadequate to transmit them to our times, may be deduced from the fact that all the weight and authority of the name of Shakspear has failed to prevent from growing obsolete no less than 2,000 words actually used by him, although

his works are more diffused and better known than those of any other writer.

5. The immediate effect of printing was, however, least felt where it might have been most expected, and certainly was most required. It found the orthography in so confused and perplexing a state, that the only standard of spelling seems to have been the individual taste and fancy of the writer, and in that state it allowed it to continue for centuries. Such a thing as bad spelling in those days was unknown, because every one spelled as he pleased, differing not only from every one else, but from himself. We have just seen Caxton *printing* the same word differently in the same passage and even sentence. Later on, Tyndal published his version of the N. T. (1525), in which he spells the pronoun *it* in no less than eight different ways: *it, itt, yt, ytt, hitt, hit, hyt, hytt*, four or five occurring sometimes in the same page. A passage from *St. Luke* (xvi.) he cites in a subsequent work, *The Parable of the Wicked Mammon* (1536), but no longer in the same orthography, both varying most ingeniously from that of Crammer's Bible (1539) and the Geneva N. T. (1557):—

1525.	1536.	1539.	1557.
certayne	certain	certayn	certain
rych	riche	ryche	riche
which	whiche	whych	which
with in	within	wythin	within
moche	muche	moch	muche
fyrst	firste	first	fyrst
everlastinge	everlasting	everlastynge	everlasting
bill	byl	byll	—
steward shippe	stewardshypp	stewardshyp	stewardeshyp
stewarde shippe	stewardshypp	stewardeshyppe	stewardshyp
stewardshippe	stewardship	stewardship	stewardshyp

The last word is curious and instructive. It shows the efforts that were made by the writers to hit upon a satisfactory plan, in some instances resulting in the form finally adopted. It is also evident from these variations that the sound of the word was pretty much what it now is, and that, therefore, the language of the period is, in reality, less different from the present than it sometimes appears to be, disguised in the uncouth garb of clumsy spelling. No systematic attempt was made at uniformity until the time of

Johnson, who observes in his preface that the orthography "has been to this time unsettled and fortuitous"; and although, since the publication of his great dictionary, it may be regarded as having assumed a comparatively determined form, yet even now not isolated words, but whole classes, are in a fluctuating state, such as those in *-ick*, *-our*, *-el*, *-p*, *-t*, *-ize*, etc. We now write *music*, *public*, *logic*, without hesitation; *error*, *dolor*, *tumor*, confidently; *honor*, *favor*, *endeavor*, *Savior*, not without some mistrust; *dueling*, *traveling*, *reveling*, at a venture; and are fairly perplexed when we come to select between *worshipped* and *worshipped*, *civilize* and *civilise*. In the last edition of Worcester's dictionary there is a list of about 1800 words of "doubtful or various orthography".

6. Three causes seem to have coöperated in rendering our present orthographic system the most inconsistent and irregular in the world: (a) *change of alphabet*, (b) *change of pronunciation*, and (c) *radically defective alphabet*. (a) The A.S. alphabet, laid aside during the Early English Period, consisted of 24, ours of 26 letters; but we gained little by the substitution, having rejected two, þ and ð, which are now badly wanted, and one, æ, not quite superfluous. Of the five additional characters *j*, *k*, *q*, *v*, *z*, only *three*, *j*, *v*, *z*, are really useful, *k*=*hard c*, and *q*=*kw*, being redundant. But the transfer itself was productive of the greatest possible amount of confusion, as explained in sec. IV. (b) This was not a little increased by the change of pronunciation which has been going on from the earliest times, generally without a corresponding change of spelling. The sound changes and the form remains. Reference to the A.S., and especially to the *living* cognate tongues, proves that *b* in *tomb*, *dumb*, *climb*; *t* in *caff*, *half*, *walk*; *k* in *knee*, *knock*; *gh* in *right*, *high*, *through*, *dough*, *tough*, *cough*, *liecough*, were not originally mute or irregular as now. The dramatist, Lyly (born 1554), seems to have effected a sort of temporary revolution in the language generally, and especially in the pronunciation, by the publication in 1578 of his prose romance of *Euphues*, or the *Anatomy of Wit*. The influence of his school, as it is called of *Euphuism*, was for some time very great, especially at court and with the ladies. Blount, writing in 1632, says that "our nation are in Lyly's debt for a new English, which he taught them.

*Euphues and his England* began first that language: all our ladies were then his scholars; and that beauty in court which could not parley Euphuism . . . that *pure and reformed English*", which he introduced, was as little regarded as those who are now ignorant of French. But Euphuism soon died out, though it may have tended very much to soften the language at the time, and certainly effected a lasting change in the pronunciation of a vast number of words. Holofernes, the schoolmaster in *Love's Labour Lost*, complains bitterly to Sir Nathaniel of a system, seemingly new in his time, but now firmly established: "I abhor such fanatical fantasms, such insociable and point-devise companions, such *rackers* of *orthography* as to speak *dout* fine, when he should say *doubt*; *det*, when he should pronounce *debt*, *d*, *e*, *b*, *t*; not *d*, *e*, *t*; he clepeth a *calf*, *caufe*; *half*, *hauf*; *neighbour*, vocatur *nebour*; *neigh* abbreviated *ne*: this is abhominable (which he would call *abominable*), it insinuateth me of insanie" (act V. 1); as to attempt to restore the worthy pedant's utterance of these words, would any man at the present day. (c) Not a less fruitful source of irregularity is the *radically defective* nature of the present alphabet, more sensibly felt now than formerly, because Modern English possesses several vowel and consonantal sounds unknown to the A.S., and probably occasioned by the introduction of the French element. Thus the sound of *s* in *pleasure*, *leisure*=French *j*. The consequence is, that the English alphabet is by far the most imperfect and incomplete of all others. It supplies only twenty-three distinct letters for at least forty-four distinct sounds; for *c*=either whole *k* or *s*, *q*=*kw*, and *x*=*ks*, must be subtracted from the number twenty-six, as superfluous, leaving twenty-one sounds of the spoken language, without any written representatives. The vowel sounds are altogether twenty, with only five equivalents, employed in a most arbitrary manner:

a=5, as in *fat*,<sup>1</sup> *fast*,<sup>2</sup> *aunt*,<sup>3</sup> *far*,<sup>4</sup> *fall*.<sup>5</sup>

e=2, as in *sell*,<sup>1</sup> *sale*.<sup>2</sup>

i=3, as in *sin*,<sup>1</sup> *seen*,<sup>2</sup> *sign*.<sup>3</sup>

o=3, as in *not*,<sup>1</sup> *nor*,<sup>2</sup> *note*.<sup>3</sup>

u=5, as in *fur*,<sup>1</sup> *tub*,<sup>2</sup> *full*,<sup>3</sup> *fool*,<sup>4</sup> *few*.<sup>5</sup>

Diphthongs. { oi=1, as in boy.  
ou=1, as in bow.



The distinct consonantal sounds are twenty-four, expressed by eighteen distinct characters and six combinations; and even two of these are redundant; *gh*=*g* hard, *ph*=*f*; and one equivocal *th*=*þ* and *ð*. The twenty-four consonantal sounds are: *b*, *d*, *dh*=*ð*=*th* in *then*, *f*, *g* hard, *h*, *j*, *k*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *ng*, *p*, *r*, *s*, *sh*, *t*, *th*=*þ*=*th* in *thin*, *v*, *w*, *y*, *z*, *zh*=*j* French, as in *delusion*, *intrusion*, *treasure*, *measure*. In England *Asia* is pronounced *Azhia*.

7. The difference between the grammar of Middle and Modern English consists in the disappearance from the latter of the inflexions explained as peculiar to the former in the last section (§. 2-7), and should be there studied. Here it has all been pure loss, no gain. The tendency throughout has been to throw off all the existing forms in the language, not to revive old or invent new. Any accession, therefore, must have accrued from foreign sources, Norman or Latin. But it cannot be too strongly insisted upon that such a mixture of grammar as this would imply, is a rare phenomenon in any language, and is unknown to the English. The Greeks would not tolerate even a proper name until it put on a Greek appearance, and submitted itself to the laws of their grammar. Hence Jerusalem becomes *Hierosolyma*; Astarte, *Astroarche* (the star-ruler); and the Byzantine writers, at a time when the language was breaking up, always decline and conjugate regularly any terms they appropriate from the Westerns: *οἱ καβαλλάρειοι-ων-ιους*, *Chevaliers*, *τουρνισειν* from *τουρνιμεντον*. Accordingly, there is no single accession to English grammar from any foreign quarter. The few forms that still survive are the wreck of the A.S. system, developed in Section II., and, in the following table, may be traced down from it through the different periods here treated. The whole body of actual and possible inflexions is only twenty-five, of which sixteen are fixed and appropriated by the pronouns: *mine*, *my*, *me*, etc. The nine moveable and available forms for general application are: noun 1, *s* or *'s*; adj. 2, *er*, *est*; verb 6, *est*, *eth*, *s*, *ed*, *edst*, *ing*; three of which, *est*, *eth*, *edst*, as well as three of the pronominal forms, *thine*, *thy*, *thee*, have already disappeared from the spoken language. If we reflect that such forms as the irregular plur. in *-en*, or by a change of vowel,

*oocen, teeth*, etc.; the gen. in *-r*, *our, your, their*; the dat. or acc. in *-m*, *him, them, whom*; the strong præterites, *broke, gave*; the present of *be, am, art, is, are*; the past of *wesan, was, were*, etc., are stationary and incapable of further use, we may conclude that the English language has reached a perfect state of analysis, short of just six noun and verbal endings: *-s* or *-'s*,\* *-er, est*; *-s, -ed*,\* *ing*, the same number that a single tense of any French, Italian, or Latin verb presents: *-o, -as, -at, -amus, -atis, -ant*. However, in the table account will be taken of the principal existing forms, in order to show that such as they are they must all be referred to the one native source. The plural *s* might occasion some doubt, being apparently derivable from the Norman as well as the Saxon. But it has been shown, in Section III., that the Norman had not even any indirect influence in causing a preference for one Saxon declension rather than for another.

8. In each stage of the language there always existed, side by side, double forms, a strong and a weak, the former disappearing at the next stage, and the latter now becoming the strong, with a further softening for the weak, and so on. The A.S. plural of the past tense was both *lufoden* and *lufedon*; in Semi-Saxon *lufodon* goes out, *lufedon* becomes the strong, *lufeden* the weak form; in Early English, *lufeden* and *loveden*; in Middle English, *lovédén* and *lovédé*; in Modern English, *lovéd* and *lov'd*. In the table, the strong form of each period has been selected in preference, in order to mark more distinctly the gradations from one to the other. In the modern, however, it was necessary to give the spoken or weak form, the written being deceptive: *have* = *hav(e)*.

A.S.	Semi-Saxon.	Early E. SUBSTANTIVE.	Middle E.	Modern E.
cyninges	cininges	kingis	kinges	king's
cyningas	cininges	kingis	kinges	king's
bóc	bóe	bok	bokes	book
béc	boces	bokis	bokes	books
bóca	boces	bokis	bokes	books'
cycenn	cicenes	kikens	chicken	chickens
cildru	cildra	childer	childeren	children
oxan	oxan	oxen	oxen	oxen
mannæ	mannes	mennis	mennes	men's

\* The variations *-es, -t, churches, boxes, clipt, blest*, etc., are mere matters of euphony, just as *s* in reality is pronounced *z* after a flat: *landz, headz*, though written *lands, heads*.

A.S.	Semi-Saxon.	Early E.	Middle E.	Modern E.
ADJECTIVE.				
fægera	fæire	of fayre	of faire	of fair (pl.)
fægra	fæiror	the fayror	the fairer	the fairer (def.)
fægreste	fæireste	fayreste	fairest	fairest
gelle	illiche	liche	like	like, -ly
fægerlice	fæierliche	fayrliche	fairlike	fairly
fægrost	fæierest	fayrest	fairest	fairest (adv.)
(lytel) læsse	lasse	lasse	lesse	less
(lytel) wyrrast	wirrest	worest	worest	worst
PRONOUN.				
seo, hyre	heo, here	ho, hire	she, hir	she, her
hit, his	hit, his	hyt, his	yt, his	it, its
heom, heora	heom, here	to hom, hire	to hem, hir	to them, their
VERB.				
hæbbe	habbe	hæfe	have	hav (e)
hæfast	hafast	hæfest	havest	hast
hæfaþ	hafath	hæfethth	haveth	has
hæfaþ	hafedh	hafeth	haven han	} hav (e) pl.
hæfde	hafde	hedde	hadde	
hæfdest	hafdest	haddest	haddest	hadst
hæfdon	hafden	hadden	hadden	had, pl.
habban	} habben	hafen	haven han	} to hav (e)
to habbenne		hafande	havand	
hæbbende	habbende	hafaende	cleansing	having
cleansende	cleansende	cleansande	cleansung	cleansing
cleansung	cleansung	cleansynge	cleansing	a' cleansing
weop	weop	wop*	weped	wept
wearon	weoren	wearen	weren	were
gehaten	ihoten	ihote	ihight	hight
cleopode	clupode	clepede	cleped	clept
weorðan	worden	worthen	worthet	to be.

9. Most of these forms actually occur in the writers of the several periods; such as do not, have been formed by analogy. A few seem to require further explanation.

\* "Myne herte wop for grete drede".

A. Davie, A.D. 1312.

This is but one of a number of *strong* präterites displaced by the weak form. Both often exist side by side, *wrought, worked*. The *strong* must ultimately yield in all cases, unless it changes its meaning and becomes an adjective, as here.

† The loss of this auxiliary, *worth=fieri*, is one of the greatest the language has sustained. For want of it we have no equivalent to the present passive in Latin and other languages. *I am loved=amatus sum*, not to *amor*. It was still in use throughout the middle English period: "My joye is tourned in to strife—that sobre shall I never worthe" (*Gower*), and retained long after by the Scotch in *multis saxonizantes*: "Ever as the battle *worthis* mair cruel" (*Douglas*). It occurs even now in the expression *woe worth*, common in Spenser and later writers: "wo worth, wo worth ye, my merry men all" (*Ballad of Little Musgrave*); "woe worth the day" (*W. Scott*); "wo worth the man" (*Spenser*).

*Chick-en* is universally believed to be the old pl. of *chick*, as *ox-en* is of *ox*, the modern *chick-ens* being considered an instance of a double pl., occasioned by ignorance of the original pl. force of *-en* in a certain class of A.S. words: "*Sunt qui dicunt in singulari 'chicken', et in plurali 'chickens'.*" (*Wallis*). Yet here *-en* is not the A.S. pl. *-an* of the def. or simple declension (page 20), but a diminutive A.S. ending: *cóc*=*cock*, *cycen*=*chicken*, with an irregular pl. *cycenu*. If in Sussex "they would as soon think of saying 'oxens' as 'chickens' (*Trench*), we can only conclude that provincialisms are not always infallible. So also the *-in* of *welkin* from *wolcen*, pl. *wolcenu*, is radical, though generally assumed to be originally pl. *Child-r-en*, on the other hand, from *cild*, pl. *cild-ru*, is an instance of a double pl. which has not been satisfactorily accounted for. The old form is still retained in the Irishism *childer*, proving that the additional *n* was subsequent to the English invasion. The *r* of *breth-r-en* is radical, and the *-en* is pl., not explained by the A.S. *broðor*, pl. *gebroðra*, *broðra*, and *broðru*. The further change of the radical vowel *o* into *e* would imply a Norse affinity: *broder*, pl. *bröder* (Swedish). Nor is the *n* of *swine* originally pl.: A.S. *swin*, pl. *swinas*. It is a distinct word from, not a pl. of, *sow*=*sug* and *sugu*. Shakspear says properly, "O monstrous beast! how like a *swine* he lies". By comparing *cow*, *kine*, with *cu*, pl. *cý*, and *man*, *men*, with *man*, pl. *menn* irreg., it will appear that the only real remnant of the A.S. def. declension is *ox*, *ox-en*, from *oza*, *oxan*. Another instance would be *een* and *eyne* for *eyes*, from *edge*, pl. *edgan*: "our watry eyne" (*Shaks.*). But it is now obsolete, though retained in Scotch *ee*, *een*, which is said in many respects to be "Anglica hodierna purior" (*Casaubon*). The most modern work we remember to have met it in is *Childe Harold*, where it occurs in the opening. The two plurals, *shoes* and *shoon*, were both found in the irreg. pl. *sceós*, *scós*, *gescý*, and *scon*, *sceón* of *sceó*, *sco*, *scoe*=*shoe*. These and other old English forms not existing in the written A.S., such as *doghten*=A.S. *dóhtra*, *bishopen*=*bisceopas*, *treen*=*treowas*, *sustren*=*sweostra*, only prove that the A.S. we are acquainted with represents after all but one variety, that of Wessex;

whereas in reality the spoken language was at all times split up into a number of dialects, distinguished by certain peculiarities, amongst which may have been a more general pl. in *-en* than is found in the classic language of Alfred. Higden mentions three distinct dialects prevalent in his time (fourteenth century)—the northern, the southern, and the midland or Mercian. "In the above three-fold Saxon tongue, which has barely survived among a few country people, the men of the east agree more in speech with those of the west, than the northern men with the southern. Hence the Mercians or Midland English, partaking, as it were, the nature of the extremes, understand the neighbouring dialects, the northern and the southern, better than those last understand each other. The whole speech of the Northumbrians, especially in Yorkshire, is so harsh and rude, that we southern men cannot understand it". It is generally believed that it was the union of the midland and southern which produced the present literary language, just as the northern siding with the Lowland ultimately resulted in the modern Scotch. These inflexions in *-en*, now obsolete, may therefore be referred to the midland element, and may help to confirm the statement of Sir F. Madden, that "the dialects of the western, southern, and midland counties contributed together to form the language of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and, consequently, to lay the foundation of modern English". It has been remarked by competent judges that the provincial speech of Berkshire, the native place of Alfred, resembles most the written A.S., while that of Leicestershire and neighbouring counties, which is "remarkable for its want of tone, has contributed more than any of our other living dialects to the formation of our present standard English"—*Engl. Rhythms, in Craik's Outlines*.

10. In the comparative table all the modern inflexions are accounted for, except the gen. of *it*, *its* for *his*; *th* for *h* in *they*, *them*, *their*; and the *s* in the third pers. sing. pres. indicative for *eth* or *th*, *has* for *haveth*, *hath*. The substitution of *its* for *his* is one of the most singular instances in the language of the importance sometimes attaching to little words and grammatical anomalies. The change is

not only modern, but even recent, still unknown in the provincialisms of the south of England. It began about the time of Shakspear, who uses both forms, but more commonly *his*:

"Who can impress the forest, bid the tree  
Unfix *his* earthbound root?" (*Macbeth*).

Bacon writes: "Opium loseth some of *his* poisonous qualities"; Carew: "This rule admitteth *his* exceptions"; and the Anglican Bible: "*his* shaft and *his* branch, *his* bowls, *his* knops and *his* flowers", speaking of the candlestick (*Exod.*, xxxvii.). *Its*, in fact, never once occurs throughout the whole of that version. But it is met with in the poems forged by Chatterton in the last century, as the productions of a Monk Rowlie, living in the fifteenth:

"Life and all *its* goods I scorn".

The famous controversy which they occasioned would have been prevented, and the cheat at once detected, had attention been paid to this single point. The substitution is doubtless an advantage, adding much to the clearness of the language, and was probably occasioned by the necessity of distinguishing between *his* masc. and *his* neut. *His* was considered as more properly the gen. of *he*, and a new gen. was created for it by analogy: *it*, *its*, like *man*, *man's* (see Sec. V. §. 6 *ad finem*). The change of *they*, *their*, and *them*, for *hi*, *hire*, and *hem*, is much more ancient. Chaucer uses both, but prefers the old, while Barbour almost invariably adopts the modern *thai*, *thar*, and *thaim*, and even *thei*, *their*, *them*:—

"Thei sembled all so hardily,  
That *their* foes felt *their* coming well.  
\* \* \* They dang on *them* with all *their* might,  
*Their* foes received well I heght" \* \* \* (*The Bruce*).

Reference to the kindred tongues proves that the A.S. *hi*, *heora*, *heom*, are themselves corruptions, perhaps peculiar to the Southern or Wessex dialect. So that in this instance the modern forms are a return to the primitive, preserved throughout in the Northern and Scottish varieties. Gothic. Lithuanian. Slavonian. Old H. German. A S. Mod. E.

thai	tie	ti	diê	hi	they
thaim	tiemus	tiem	dêm	heom	them
thize			dero	heora	their

The necessity, again, of avoiding confusion seems to have occasioned this revival: *heom* softened to *him* was no longer distinguishable from *him* sing.; *heora* to *hira*, *hire*; *hir*, *her* from *her* fem. sing.; *hi* from *he*. In the metrical romance of Alexander the Great, of unknown hand and date, a great variety of forms occurs, sometimes in the same passage: *hi*, *thei*, and *thai*; *their*, *here*, *hure*, and *hur*; *them*, *hom*, and *hem*. But the whole composition is remarkable for a strange mixture of inflexions, old and new, and even of poetic systems, using rhyme and alliteration indifferently, and sometimes both:—

“When this weith at his wil wedinge  
 Hadde, fful rathe rommede he rydinge \* \* \*  
 And had grave on the ground many grete cavus,  
 There *here* wonnyng was wynturus and somerus”.

*My*, *his*, *their*, etc., are constantly called possessive *pronouns* instead of possessive *cases*. If *I*, *he*, *they*, are personal pronouns, they must remain such throughout their inflexions, for a word cannot be one thing in one case and another thing in another, a noun in the sing., an adjective in the pl. Real poss. pronouns partake of the nature of adjectives, agreeing with the *thing possessed*: *caput suum*. These stand for, and agree with, the possessor: *his*, *her* head. Of the two, the latter seems the more logical expression, and it will be generally found that the structure of the English is more consistent with sound reason than that of most languages, the peculiar form they assume depending much upon the national genius. The strong practical turn of the English mind is well illustrated by the present state of English Grammar, in which everything has been rejected which appeared superfluous, and such inflexions alone retained as were absolutely required for the sense. The noun has preserved a pl. ending, the adjective remaining unchanged. It was thought more rational to make the pronoun in all cases agree with the person it stood for, and common sense evidently suggested the present philosophic arrangement of gender, by which English is distinguished from all other European languages. The tendency to analysis may therefore be said to have been guided and influenced by a sort of national instinct, causing it to result in a system unsurpassed for clearness and simplicity.

11. The existence side by side, from the earliest times, of the two forms for the third pers. pres. indicative, *loveth* and *loves*, is an additional proof that the written language has resulted from the fusion of the different spoken varieties. *Th* seems to be peculiarly southern, from A.S. *ṡ* and *aṡ*; and *lov'th*, *read'th*, *zee'th*, *rain'th*, are still heard in Somerset, where the old southern dialect is best preserved. Dolman, in the sixteenth century, writes:—

“So mid the vale, the grayhound seeing start  
His fearful foe pursu'th, before she fler'th  
And where she turn'th he turn'th her there to beare,  
The one prey prick'th, the other saefties feare”.

The northerns show, on the other hand, a preference for *s*, even in the plural. Barbour has *giffis* where Chaucer would say *giveth*, *mayse* for *maketh*, *levys* for *liveth*, and the Scottish ballad of the *Jew's Daughter* begins:

“The rain *rins* down through Mirry-land toune (Milan),  
Sae *dois* it doune the Pa (the Po):  
Sae *dois* the lads of Mirry-land toune,  
Quhan they play at the ba”.

James I. terminates all his plurals in *s*: he *loves*, we, ye, they *loves*; just as in early English they said: he *loveth*, we, ye, they *loveth*. The present of *give* in the different periods and dialects shows that the modern form is northern and Scotch rather than southern:—

Middle E.								
	Saxon.	Early E.	South.	North.	Modern.	Kent.	Waxford.	Scotch.
	gife	gife	givé	giffes	giv(e)	yef	gi'	gie
	gifest	gifest	gívest	gífst	gívest	yefst	gi'st	gie'st
	gífʒ	gífeth	gívetʰ	gífts	giv(e)s	yefth	gi'th*	gie's
pl.	{ gífaʒ	gífeth	given	gífts	giv(e)	yef	gi'th	gie
	gífe							

The forms *hav-and* and *clens-ing*, in the fourth column,

\* “He et nouth fade t'zey ee'lean vetch eeman” [He that knows what to say, mischief fetch the man]. See, in the first number of the *ATLANTIS*, an interesting paper by Dr. Russell, President of Maynooth, on this curious old Saxon dialect, surviving until recently in the barony of Forth, county Wexford. He observes, that “it appears to partake of the vocabulary of each of the three great English provincial groups—the Northumbrian, the Mercian, and the Saxon, but especially of the last. Moreover, judging from the inflexions of the verb, and from the *participial forms*, it seems to me to belong to a period especially requiring illustration”.



point out the time when the active part. in *-ende* began to be confounded with the verbal substantive in *-ing* and *-ung*, explained in Sec. IV. §. 7. Here it may be observed that this participle, in nearly all grammars, is wrongly called *present* instead of *active*. It properly implies action as opposed to passion, being quite indifferent as to *time*: I *am, was, and will be* loving. So also the participle in *-ed* is not *past* rather than present or future: I *am, was, will be* loved; but always passive, even in such phrases as, "I have written a letter" = "I have a letter written". It is not creditable to English philology that the handful of inflexions surviving in the language are not yet properly understood or correctly set forth.

12. Hitherto account has been taken only of the *notional* words, which are alone subject to inflexion. It is obvious that the number of *relational* words must increase in proportion as the inflexions disappear. Accordingly we find a great variety of them in modern English, employed in a multiplicity of ways not always easy of explanation. Their very right to be considered as words at all has been questioned, on the ground that they do not answer to the strict logical definition of a term "*vox ideam exprimens*". *At, from, by*, are indeed *voces*, or articulate sounds, but seemingly not *termini*, being meaningless in themselves, and only employed as substitutes for the old case-endings *-an, -um, -ena*, which nobody ever maintained to be terms. Here it is necessary to distinguish between relational terms *living* and *dead*, between those that still possess an independent existence of their own, and those that are now destitute of any intrinsic value, between *do*, used as an auxiliary, and the conjunction *if*. The former present no difficulty, being clearly terms in the strict sense; the latter, whether explicable or not by reference to A.S., all sound linguists now agree in considering as originally true words, like any other, which, by constant use, have come to lose their primitive force, and to be employed only as particles. Such a thing as a deliberate invention of a conjunction or preposition, any more than of a case or verb-ending, otherwise void of meaning, cannot well be conceived to have taken place at any time. Consequently, if we are now unable to trace any of these so-called particles back to

their primitive force, we can only conclude that we are not acquainted with a sufficiently ancient state of the mother-tongue to do so. This view is strengthened by the fact that a large number of them having been already clearly accounted for, argues a like conclusion for the rest, just as a few stones falling to the ground satisfy us that all will if tested. *Through* appears to have been the same originally as the noun *door* in the sense of a *passage* or *medium*. Chaucer writes: "Idlenesse the *gate* of all harmes, the *thorukke* of all wycked thoughtes", i.e., as we should say, *through* which they enter. But it cannot be denied that this is very slippery ground, on which more learning and research than sound reasoning have been hitherto expended. The most firmly-established conclusions, such as *if=giv=* imperative of *give=grant*, have been subsequently shaken, and all that is yet really certain is the principle here laid down.

18. The statement that the language has remained unchanged since the middle of the fifteenth century, is true only of its internal structure or grammar. In fixing the date of the modern period no account was or could be taken of the vocabulary, which never is at rest in any living tongue, least of all in English. No people ever borrowed words to any thing like the same extent as the English. Insular and exclusive in other respects, they are certainly the most cosmopolite of nations in this. All the known languages of the world, living or dead, that they have at any time come in contact with, have contributed to increase their stock of words to such an extent as to render any attempt at complete classification impossible. Yet in an historical survey of the one hundred and odd thousand terms contained in the latest dictionaries, a very broad distinction at once presents itself, it being evident that after all the great bulk is made up of *Saxon* and *Romance*. Accessions from all other quarters are too insignificant to be compared with these, and may be safely grouped for the moment under the one head of *miscellaneous*. Here the Saxon portion claims our attention first, for it is not, indeed, "so much one element of the English language as the foundation of it, the basis. All its joints, its whole *articulation*, its sinews, and its ligaments, the great body of articles, pronouns, cor

junctions, prepositions, numerals, auxiliary verbs, all smaller words which serve to knit together and bind the larger into sentences, these, not to speak of the grammatical structure of the language, are exclusively Saxon"—*English Past and Present*. From which it appears, that in contrasting the two elements, the question of number is of secondary importance, compared with that of the *nature* of the words. Of the 28,000 words in Bosworth's A.S. dictionary, about 6,000 are supposed to be now obsolete, leaving not more than 22—Bosworth says 23,000—out of 100,000 of Saxon origin—a large balance in favour of the foreign element. Such is, perhaps, the proportion that obtains in dictionaries, where the language is *at rest*, and where a prodigious number of words are enrolled which never existed outside the pages of those works, and of the writers whence they were extracted. But the comparison should be made by the analysis of sentences, or of the language *in motion*, in order to form a correct notion of the proportion that obtains practically. Here it is that, on account of the character of the words that are Saxon, the calculation of Trench is really verified. "Let us suppose the English language to be divided into a hundred parts: of these, to make a rough distribution, *sixty* would be Saxon; *thirty* would be Latin (including of course the Latin which has come to us through the French); five would be Greek. We should thus have assigned ninety-five parts, leaving the other five, perhaps too large a residue, to be divided among all the other languages from which we have adopted isolated words". And in another part of the same admirable lecture upon "English a Composite Language", he suggests a good practical test of the great predominance of the Saxon element in composition. We shall find, by experience, that it is all but impossible to put together a single sentence of ordinary length, employing exclusively Latin terms, whereas we may, without much strain write whole pages of pure Saxon, without the aid of any foreign words. In fact a logical proposition cannot be uttered in Latin, because the copula is always Saxon. We thus obtain a twofold proportion of

(a) Saxon : foreign :: 23 : 77 in dictionaries.

(b) Saxon : foreign :: 4 : 1 in the ordinary run of sentences.

And even the preponderance of the foreign over the native element in (a) will be considerably modified, when we reflect that it includes not only roots, but a large number of derivatives formed on them by means of Saxon aff- and suffixes: *mis, un, ly, ness, less, ful, ship*, etc. Thus from the Latin *use*, we get *useful, usefully, useless, uselessness*; so *freshness, duti-ful, brief-less, falsehood*, words which might, with equal propriety, be classed with the native element. The converse of this, i.e. the formation of derivatives on Saxon roots by means of Latin adjuncts, a, ab, pro, ex, al, tion, etc., does not hold as a rule. *Starv-ation* is a curious instance, coined in 1775 by Mr. Dundas, the first Viscount Melville, thence nick-named "Starvation Dundas". We say law-ful, but leg-al, un-law-ful and il-leg-al, law-fulness and leg-al-ity. An exception should, however, be made in favour of the ending -able, used in such a variety of ways and with such an utter disregard of its original active force: *eatables, drinkables*, for things that may be eaten or drunk; *movable, allowable, sensible*, for senseful, sensitive, and sensible in the expression, "a sensible man; very sensible of the cold, and of any sensible change in the weather"—*Diversions of Purley*. The ratio of 23 : 77 is further diminished by the fact, that many of the Saxon words are susceptible of so many different meanings, and of such a variety of applications, that they are often equivalent to four or five distinct terms; so that the whole number, 23, will be employed, on a rough calculation, at least three times oftener than the 77 representing the foreign element. Dr. Withers has illustrated the capabilities of the word *get* by a short specimen, in which it occurs 29 times, nearly always in a different sense, without exhausting its almost endless significations: "I *got* on horseback after I *got* your letter. When I *got* to Canterbury, I *got* a chaise for town; but I *got* wet through . . . *got* such a cold . . . to *get* rid of . . . *got* shaved . . . *got* into the secret . . . *got* back . . . *got* to bed . . . *got* up . . . *got* down . . . *got* out . . . . *got* home, etc."

14. Thus, then, the Latin element, though actually outnumbering the native, is, in reality, of far less importance. The accessions from this source have been divided into the

four following periods, which are so far convenient that they point out at once both the time and the nature of the words introduced at different epochs:—

A.D.		
(a) Roman Latin	(1-400)	} explained in sec. II. §. 15.
(b) Church Latin	(400-1066)	
(c) Norman Latin	(1066-1450)	,, in sec. IV. §. 9 and 10.
(d) Book Latin	(1460-1800)	

The amount contributed to each of these stages may be represented by the proportions:—

$$\begin{array}{l} a+b : c :: 1 : 100 \\ a+b+c : d :: 1 : 20 \end{array}$$

That is to say, 100 words were appropriated during the Norman Latin Period, for every one during the two previous taken together; and 20 during the last, or Book Latin Period, for every one during the three previous taken together. In fact, the actual number borrowed directly and indirectly from the Latin throughout the whole of (d) is altogether incalculable, if we take into account as well those that were rejected as those that were retained. A steady stream of Latinisms was poured into the language with little interruption from the age of Chaucer to that of Johnson, at some times more copiously than at others, according to the greater or less prevalence of pedantry and learning. It is remarkable that the Northerners carried the practice to the greatest extent, introducing indiscriminately Latin and French words wholesale into their compositions, especially in the fifteenth century, by which they disfigured their own writings without enriching the language. "The prevailing fault of English diction in the fifteenth century, is redundant ornament and an affectation of Anglicising Latin words. In this pedantry and use of *aureate terms*, the Scottish versifiers went even beyond their brethren of the South . . . . . When they meant to be eloquent, they tore up words from the Latin, which never took root in the language, like children making a mock garden with flowers and branches stuck in the ground, which speedily wither"—*Campbell in Trench*. Some idea of the length to which the Scotch poets went in this

respect may be formed by a passage from the *Æneid* of Douglas, in the opening of the twelfth book :—

“The *auriate* vanes of his throne-soverane  
With glittering glance o’erspread the oceane ;  
The large fludis leaming all of licht,  
With but ane blink of his *supernal* sicht.  
For to behold it was ane *glorie* to see  
The stabled windis and the coloured sea,  
The soft season, the *firmament serene*,  
The lowne *illuminate* air, and firth *amene*”.

Here there are thirteen Latin words, of which the seven in *Italics* were probably coined for the occasion by the poet. The Scottish dialect thus came to be distinguished by two seemingly opposite tendencies, towards the classic tongues in its vocabulary, the Saxon in its grammar (see in this sec., §. 8 and 9).

The rage for appropriation prevailed in England principally in the fifteenth century, throughout the Elizabethan age in its greatest extent, and from the restoration to the death of Johnson (1784). The wars of Marlborough caused a second accession of French words, chiefly military, of which Addison says in the *Spectator* (No. 165) :—“The present war has so adulterated our tongue with strange words, that it would be impossible for one of our great-grandfathers to know what his posterity have been doing, were he to read their exploits in a modern newspaper. Our warriors are very industrious in propagating the French language at the same time that they are so gloriously successful in beating down their power”. He instances *reconnoitre*, *marauder*, *corps*, *commandant*, *pontoon*, *fascine*, etc., as recent innovations.

15. A variety of causes coöperated in rendering the English the most absorbing of all languages. There was first of all the facility and habit acquired by the practice of the Anglo-Norman writers, explained in the last section, §. 11 and 12, of which scribblers availed themselves without restraint, introducing an incredible number of foreign words into their writings, through their eagerness to exhibit to the world their ignorance of their own, and superficial acquaintance with strange tongues. The sort of medley that resulted, and which in times of pedantry passed for fine

writing, may be judged of by the style of the following passage in the preface of "a prose narrative of the adventures of this same Knight of the Swan (*Chevelere de Cigne*), newly translated (1512) out of Frenshe into Englishe at thinstigacion of the puyssaunt and illustrious prynce, lorde Edward, duke of Buckyngham (beheaded 1521). . . . This highe dygne and illustrious prynce . . . desyrynge cotydially to encrease and augment the name and fame of such as were relucient in virtuouse feates and triumphant acts of chyvalry, and to encourage and styre every lusty and genteel herte by the exemplyficacyon of the same, havynge a goodly booke of the highe and miraculous histori of a famous and puyssant kynge named Oryant". Further on occur the words *ententisly*, *moiening*, *cohorted*, *entendement*, and many hundred more not now used, but generally current at the time in the works of a class of writers, who "do greatly seek to stain the language by fond affectation of foreign and strange words, presuming that to be the best English which is most corrupted with external terms of eloquence and sound of many syllables"—*Harrison's Chronicle, Sixteenth Century*. Over 3,000 such short-lived terms are to be found in the works of Sir H. Browne and Jeremy Taylor.

Another inducement to borrow largely was the necessity scientific writers and translators were under of finding equivalents for such compound and abstract terms as either never existed in the language, or had disappeared during a long period of neglect. In all cases it was much more expeditious to take the word supplied by the text, drop its inflexions, and give it an English air, by slightly modifying the termination. In this way the early translators of Scripture Anglicised words like *perdition*, *consolation*, *reconciliation*, *sanctification*, *immortality*, *transfigure*. A numerous class of theological, philosophical, abstract, and general terms was thus introduced, first into learned works, and then, as these were perused with the spread of general reading, into the current literature, and so familiarised. The number was increased by a natural desire, felt especially by translators, of enriching the language with synonyms and forcible terms, even when corresponding

words already existed. In the treatment of elevated subjects, many Normanized Latin words had become too common-place to be any longer available, necessitating a second importation, in a different form, of the same word, or of derivatives direct from the Latin, of previously incorporated Norman roots. A curious instance is the Norman *almosine*, filed down through *almosie*, *almose*, *almes*, to the monosyllable *almas*, with its seven-syllabled adjective of later date, *eleemosynary*, from the original. The following table will show how abstract derivatives were taken from the Latin, rather than formed on existing Norman and Saxon roots. Some of these thus came to lose the power of further development, as *church*, *side*, *hinge*, whilst the adjectives formed on others seemed to lack dignity, though useful in their proper place, *child-like*, *boyish*, etc. :—

church,	ecclesia,	ecclesiastical	isle,	insula,	insular:
child,	infans,	infantine.	dog,	canis,	canine.
boy,	puer,	puerile.	reason,	ratio,	rational.
people,	populus,	populous.	money,	pecunia,	pecuniary.
heart,	cor,	cordial.	sun,	sol,	solar.
hinge,	cardo,	cardinal.	east,	oriens,	oriental.
side,	latus,	lateral.	parish,	parochia,	parochial.
father,	pater,	paternal.	enemy,	inimicus,	inimical.
priest,	sacerdos,	sacerdotal.	chapter,	capitulum,	capitular.
kind,	genus,	general-ic.	root,	radex,	radical.

But, perhaps, the greatest cause of all, as that on which those just mentioned were based, was the extremely simple state the language had been reduced to in its structure at the time when the want of a large supply of new words was first experienced. It is evident that a synthetic language never could become a borrower to any extent, its numerous inflexions warding off all intruders at whatever point they may wish to force an entrance. Hence the homogeneous character of the classic tongues, and the failure of a large number of Greek terms in attempting to insinuate themselves into Latin, even when taken up by Plautus, Cicero, and others of the greatest weight in literature. *Harpagare* (*ἀρπαζω*) might read very well, just in one or two tenses or persons, but in others it would appear ridiculous: *harpagabamur*, *harpagarentur*, etc.; so *apolactizare*, *morologus*, *techna*, *mastigias*, and others, in Plautus and Terence, refusing to conform themselves to Latin grammar, occasionally also because not required, were ultimately discarded. The



Romans were thus compelled to fall back on native sources, just as English writers would have been driven to cultivate the Saxon, had the language preserved any considerable portion of its inflexions when its sphere of action began to be enlarged in the fifteenth century. Then, the Saxon element failing, they would have had recourse to idioms and phrases, such as those employed by the early translators of Scripture, to explain newly-adopted words, or to supply the place of others that could not be incorporated: "I do thankings to God up on the *unenarrable*, or, *that may not be told*, gifte of him" (II. Cor., ix.); so "whatever thingis *amyable*, or *able to be lovid*"; *swadible*, i.e., *esi for to trete and to be tretia*"; "thou that art *to comynge*"=qui venturus es; "that is *to demynge* the quyke and deed"=judicaturus vivos et mortuos, etc., occurring in a version of the N. T. made about 1350. The oneness, or homogeneous character, of the language would have been thus preserved at the expense of the more valuable qualities of boundless wealth and expressiveness. We may conclude that the English never could have become the most composite of all European tongues in its vocabulary, unless it had first become the most analytic in its grammar.

16. Considered with regard as well to the *manner* as to the *time* of their adoption, the whole body of Latin words may be divided into four classes. Some, principally relating to church matters, were introduced in Saxon times. These were, therefore, first *Saxonized*: episcopus=biscep=bishop (*a*). Some in Norman times, and therefore *Normanized*: amabilis=aimable=amiable (*b*). Some during the modern period direct, and simply *Anglicized*: homicida=homicide (*c*). Some recently, chiefly technical, without any change: postulata (*d*). A few have actually undergone all these processes, as:—

(a).	(b).	(c).	(d).
{predic-re, {predician,	prêcheur, preacher,	prædicare, predicate,	prædicata. prædicata.
{sanctus, {sanct,	sanctifier, sanctify,	sanctitas, sanctity,	S. sanctorum. S. sanctorum.
{candela, {candel,	chandlier, chandler,	candelabrum. candelabrum,	candelabra. candelabra.

It should, however, be observed, with regard to most of

these Saxonized words, that the orthography of their present equivalents proves them to be a later importation through the Norman, not a modification of the older forms. *Munk* may be from *munuc*, *priest* from *preost*, but *porch* is evidently the Norman *porche*, not the Saxon *portic*; *parsley* from *persil* rather than from *peterselige*; so *saint*, *preach*, perhaps *chalice* (see page 28). Several have gone through the three first, as:—

(a).	(b).	(c).
{clauster,	cloître,	claustrum.
{cluster,	cloister,	claustral.
{pæl,	palliatif,	pallium.
{pall,	palliative,	pallium.
{munuc,	monachisme,	monachus.
{munk,	monachism,	monachal.
{mynster,	monastère,	monasticus.
{minster,	monastery (†)	monastic.
{mæsse,	missive,	missalia.
{mass,	missive,	missal.

Some of these are doubtful, nor is it always possible to say whether a word is from the Norman or Latin, *monastery* from *monastère* or *monasterium*, *liberty* from *liberté* or *libertas*, *nation* from *nation* or *natio*. Of course, if current in Norman times, the presumption will be in favour of a Norman origin, though many such terms were even then introduced direct from the Latin by translators from Latin works, especially Trevisa and Wickliff. Others through the three last, as:—

(b).	(c).	(d).	(b).	(c).	(d).
ray,	radius,	radil.	indicant,	indexes,	indices.
radiant,	radiate,	radiata.	nebule,	nebulous,	nebulæ.
radish,	radical,	radices.	genial,	geniuses,	genil.
addition,	add,	addenda.	general,	generate,	genera.
errant,	error,	errata.			

And a vast number through (b) and (c), always with a difference of meaning, thus contributing with their Saxon equivalents to the unequalled resources of the language in expressing the nicer shades of thought. The following list bears out, on the whole, the rule which has been laid down, that "if a word be directly from the Latin, it will not have undergone any alteration or modification in its form and shape, save only as respects the termination: 'innocentia' will have become 'innocency', 'natio' will have become 'nation', 'firmamentum', 'firmament', but

nothing more. On the other hand, if it comes *through* the French, it will generally be considerably altered in its passage. It will have undergone a process of lubrication; its sharply-defined Latin outline will in good part have departed from it; thus 'crown' is from 'corona', but through 'couronne', and itself a dissyllable, 'coroune' in our earlier English; 'treasure' is from 'thesaurus', but through 'trésor'; 'emperor' is the Latin 'imperator', but it was first 'empeur'—*E. Past and Present*, I. It also illustrates what is often found to be the case, that the Saxon element is the more poetic, the Norman the more available for ordinary purposes, and the Latin the more scientific. There is poetry in *beam*: "Smiling through pleasure's beam", or, "As a beam o'er the face of the waters", where *ray* would be intolerable. But we talk in prose of the *rays* of the sun, and in science of the *radii* of a circle.

Saxon.	Norman.	Latin.	Saxon.	Norman.	Latin.
lawful,	loyal,	legal.	weak,	frail,	fragile.
kingly,	royal,	regal.	try,	prova,	proba.
deadly,	mortal,	mortiferous.	wedlock,	marriage,	matrimony.
trust,	fealty,	fidelity.	ghost,	sprite,	spirit.
tithe,	dime,	decimal.	fearful,	horrible,	horrid.
beam,	ray,	radius.	clever,	adroit,	dexterous.
leader,	chief,	captain.	bold,	valiant,	valorous.
wonder,	marvel,	miracle.	atonement,	ransom,	redemption.
ox,	beef,	bovine.	first,	prime,	primary.
strength,	force,	fortitude.	feeling,	sense,	sensation.
wise,	sage,	sapient.	shorten,	abridge,	abbreviate.
old,	ancient,	antiquated.			

Some of the words in this list, which might be extended to any length, approach very nearly to what are called perfect synonyms. The question of the actual existence of such in any language should perhaps be decided, as metaphysicians have decided that of the possible existence of two or more objects perfectly similar without being identical, *i.e.*, *solo numero differentia*. *Intrinsece non repugnant, ergo extrinsece possibilia, sed non dantur*. So that, though such terms may be conceived as possible, practically they do not exist. The reason is because ideas being infinitely more numerous than words, it would lack common sense to bestow more than one equivalent on any given notion, while so many others are left unprovided for. Hence one term may often stand for a multiplicity of things, but no one thought will ever possess more than one

term to express it accurately. In English there are Saxon and Latin words etymologically the same, yet, perhaps, never identical in meaning. *Yearlings* are not *annuals*; so may be compared *felicity* and *happiness*, *Godhead* and *divinity*, *earth* and *soil*, *anger* and *indignation*, *rabble* and *mob* (mobile), *huge* and *vast*, *great* and *large*, *stream* and *river*; though it would be difficult to say in what lies the difference between *rivulet* and *brooklet*, or *brook* and *streamlet*. Locke does not point it out when he says: "*springs* make little *rivulets*, and these united form *brooks*, which coming forward in *streams*, compose great *ivers* that run into the sea". Perhaps all comprised would flow thus: spring, rillet, rill, rivulet, brooklet, brook, streamlet, stream, river. So great is the demand for words, that a mere difference of spelling or of termination is often sufficient to constitute a wide difference of signification. *Desk* and *dish* were originally one (*disc*); so were *skirt* and *shirt*, *black* and *bleak*. Compare also *bountiful* and *bounteous*, *joyful* and *joyous*, *changeful* and *changing*, *diamond* and *adamant*, *captive* and *caitiff*, *scandal* and *slander*, *spirit* and *sprite*, *human* and *humane*, *gentle* and *genteel*, and many others cited by Trench, who truly observes that the subject is inexhaustible (*E. Past and Present*, II.)

17. Out of the hundred parts into which the vocabulary has been distributed, ten being reserved for the *miscellaneous* (page 111), five of these will be absorbed by the Greek. Words from this source are either *indirect* through the Latin and Norman, as *bishop*, *munk*, *priest*, *monastery*, already discussed under those heads, or *direct* in modern times, generally scientific and technical. Of the latter, some have conformed to the rules of English grammar, though not always without a struggle: *ἐγκυκλοπαίδεια* (*B. Jonson*), later on "encyclopedia", and now "cyclopedia"; others have retained their proper plural endings, either because very recently adopted: *apsis*, pl. *apsides*; or through some unaccountable caprice: *κριτηριον* was new to J. Taylor, for he so writes it, but old enough now to have long ago laid aside its still retained pl. "criteria". The retention of these plurals is not always a sure test of the time of adoption, either in Latin or Greek: phenomenon

-na, datum -ta, erratum -ta, are very old, and it is a mistake to suppose that all such terms passed through this process of gradual conformation to the genius of the language. "Lipothymy", if used only by J. Taylor, was never written *λεποθυμία*, but Anglicised at once with hundreds of others, some surviving, some long since dead, at a time of indiscriminate appropriation. Words from all other sources, making up the five remaining parts, may be generally described as sporadic, a few scattered terms here and there in the collection of which writers on the English language have displayed considerable research without much discernment. Thus *cherub* and *Gehenna* are placed in the same category of words from the Hebrew. Surely some distinction should be drawn between two such terms as these. No word can be said to be properly incorporated, unless it has acquired some little power of generalization over and above its individual meaning, otherwise no distinction is observed between *proper* nouns and *common*. *Cherub* is clearly an instance of Hebrew adoption; we call a pretty child a *cherub*; so are *shibboleth*, *seraph*, *sabbath*, but *Gehenna* seems to have about as much right to be considered English as any other *proper name*, *Verona*, *Timbuctoo*. It answers strictly to the definition given by grammarians of a *proper* noun, and to no other: "proper nouns express *particular* persons or places" (*Bromby*), and we might add *things*. *Muslin*, no doubt, may be cited, as a word taken from Hindostanee, but not *lac*, until it shall come to mean something more than a particular sum of a particular coin peculiar to India. A word is not naturalized so long as it is employed to denote only special foreign things, without further extension of meaning. Words like *hallelujah*, *amen*, *razzia*, *sahara*, *chimpanzee*, are therefore excluded from the subjoined list of a few, out of many, cited by Trench in *E. Past and Present*, I. They are here arranged according to the proportion each language seems to have contributed. Arab is placed first, because the words it has supplied are really more important than all the rest put together:—

ARAB.—Admiral, alembic, alcohol, algebra, alkali, almanack, amber, arsenal, artichoke, azimuth, camphor,

carat, coffee, cotton, crimson, lemon, lime, magazine, nadir, saffron, talisman, tariff, zenith, zero.

ITALIAN.—Balcony, balustrade, bandit, bravo, bust, caricature, charlatan, ditto, gazette, influenza, motto, parapet, pianoforte, regatta, sonnet, stanza, stucco, studio, umbrella, virtuoso, zany.

SPANISH.—Alligator, alcove, barricade, bravado, cargo, cigar, gala, grenade, hooker, jennet, merino, parasol, punctilio, sherry, verandah.

DUTCH.—Boom, schooner, skates, skipper, sloop, smuggle, stiver, taffrel, wear (*veer*).

PERSIAN.—Azure, bazaar, chess\*, lilac, orange, shawl, sherbet, shrub, sofa, tambour, turban.

TURKISH.—Divan, janisary, sash, tulip, perhaps scimitar, and civet.

HINDOSTANEE.—Calico, chintz, cowrie, muslin, toddy.

AMERICAN.—Canoe, chocolate, cocoa, hamoc, maize, potato (batata), tobacco, tomat.

18. There are some few words from the German, Malay, Hebrew, and other tongues; but it is obvious that the whole of this *miscellaneous* department is as nothing compared with the Saxon and Latin elements, and is of no account in any question of style. Latin having furnished many duplicates or synonyms of Saxon words, it will be important to consider the nature of each class, in order to decide on our selection, wherever we have the option of choice. The subjoined scheme will show that the Latin words are abstract and generic, the Saxon concrete and specific; and as it is a law of style that it is the more animated and vigorous, in proportion to the prevalence of the latter, it follows that, other considerations being equally balanced, the Saxon will be the better word of the two. It is always more accurate, and in nine cases out of ten more desirable, to use specific than generic words, but also more difficult; accordingly, careless and superficial writers are full of platitudes, and platitudes are Latin.

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\* Chaturanga (Sanskrit), chatrang (Pers.), shatranj (Arab), scacchi (Ital.), echecs (French), check and chess. *Pawn* is the Indian *peon*, a foot soldier. *Rook* is doubtful, either the Pers. *rohk*, a camel bearing archers, or the Sanskrit *rat'h*, *rot'h*, corrupted to *rohk* by the Persians, an armed chariot (*S. W. Jones*).

*Affections in General. Kinds of Feeling. Motion in General. Kinds of Movement.*

impression	warmth	impulse	thrust
sensation	thrill	direction	steer
emotion	flurry	progression	brisk
disposition	mildness	ascension	climb
temper	heat	descent	roll

Space.		Form.	
region	kingdom	curve	crook
place	spot	prominence	bump
expansion	spread	passage	gutter
occupy	lodge	inequality	roughness
insert	graft	open	yawning

Thus, it will be better to speak of the *warmth* or *glow* of one's feelings, than of his *profound impressions*; to thrust, push, or drag forward, than simply to impel; to climb the tree, rather than ascend it; to graft on it, rather than insert. If a thing is curved, it is curved in some way, either crooked, or hooked, or arched; these words are, therefore, more graphic. The use of the others habitually is a mark of a barren mind in the individual, a symptom of decay in general literature. Whether modern English writers exhibit any such symptoms by too great fondness for Latin words, may be best judged of in the following comparative table, drawn up by Turner in his *Hist. of the A.S.*, on an analysis of passages from the different authors included in it. The figures in the left-hand column show the whole number of words in each extract, and those in the right-hand, the number which are foreign, or not Saxon:—

Genesis,	} Ang. Bible,	128	5	Locke,	94	20
John, xi.		74	2	Pope,	83	27
Spenser,		72	14	Young,	96	21
Shakspear,		83	13	Swift,	90	10
Milton,		89	16	Robertson,	113	34
Cowley,		77	10	Hume,	101	37
Thomson,		78	14	Gibbon,	79	32
Addison,		79	15	Johnson,	81	21

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The mean proportion not Saxon is about one-fifth, the Anglican Bible and Gibbon occupying the two extremes. The list, of course, includes no names of the present cen-

tury, during which a reaction has set in that has stopped all further appropriation from the Latin, except for scientific purposes. It being impossible to revive obsolete A.S. words, and difficult to compound English, Carlyle and his school have manifested Germanic tendencies, even in their style, just as Milton often wrote Greek and Latin sentences with English words: "and knew not eating death", *i.e.*, οὐκ ἐγνων θάνατον φαγεύσα (B. IX.) Oh, miserable of happy (X.); How can'st thou, speakable of mute? (IX.) All the different styles which have at any time prevailed may be reduced to four:—

**SAXON**—Alfred, Langland, Ang. Bible, Swift, De Foe.

**NORMAN**—Chaucer, Gower, Spenser, Dryden, Gibbon.

**LATIN**—Ben Jonson, Taylor, Milton, Douay Bible, Johnson.

**MEDIUM**—Mandeville, Shakspear, Addison, Pope, Byron, Moore, and moderns generally.

19. Throughout the whole of the last century, French was the general medium of intercourse in Europe, and at one time seemed destined to become the universal language of literature. Germans wrote in French, as the Russians still do; and only eighty years ago Gibbon purposed employing it in the composition of his great work, the *Decline and Fall*, published between the years 1776 and 1788. He was dissuaded from doing so by the advice of David Hume, who foresaw in the innumerable colonies and dependencies of the crown of England, the future ascendancy of the English. The rapid growth of these colonies has already verified Hume's prediction, and at the present day English is the most universally diffused language on the globe, being the general speech of the British Isles, Australia, Van Diemen's Land, New Zealand, South Africa, and all North America, except Mexico; or, in other words, the mother tongue of about seventy millions of human beings. In this last respect the subjoined table will show that it falls short of the Chinese and of the Hindostanee, which, as the universal medium of communication in India, is generally spoken by all classes, with little dialectic variety. Though the Chinese is split up into a great number of varieties, yet the literary standard is known everywhere, and probably understood by as many as is



here stated. Russian is restricted to the pure Russian population, though generally diffused throughout the empire. In point of extent, it ranks next to English, reaching from St. Petersburg into North America. French includes the French-speaking populations of Belgium and North America. Arabic is the most widely spread, next to the Russian, stretching without interruption from the shores of the Atlantic, through Barbary and Egypt, to the Persian frontier, and including Syria and Mesopotamia, besides Arabia Proper. In this rough estimate no account could be taken of the extent to which any of these may be known outside the country, French in Russia, English in India. The really educated in any country are comparatively few; and experience tells us that the French current outside France has not greatly improved since the days of Chaucer (see p. 80).

Chinese,	200,000,000	French,	40,000,000
Hindoostanee,	100,000,000	Russian,	35,000,000
English,	70,000,000	Arabic,	30,000,000
German,	44,000,000	Japanese,	30,000,000 (?)

It has been calculated that before the close of the century English will be spoken by about 200,000,000 of people, but whether in its integrity, or with differences of dialect by the populations of the future empires of America and Australia, is a question it would be idle here to discuss. It may be observed, however, that, notwithstanding the powerful action of climate, society, and other external causes, it is hard to believe new forms of speech will arise for many ages, directly opposed as they would be to the interests of commerce, education, literature, the free intercourse of man with man,—in a word, of civilization. A universal speech has ever been felt to be an advantage, a desideratum. When, therefore, a large portion of the human family finds itself blessed with such a boon, it will instinctively endeavour to retain possession of it. That any change in the present state of the English tongue would be a falling off, rather than an improvement, may be argued from the remarkable words of a foreigner, Jacob Grimm, with which this work may be fittingly concluded. He observes that it possesses

"A veritable power of expression, such as perhaps never stood at the command of any other language of men. . . . Its highly spiritual genius, and wonderfully happy development and condition, have been the result of a surprisingly intimate union of the two noblest languages in modern Europe, the Teutonic and the Romance. It is well known in what relation these two stand to one another in the English tongue, the former supplying in far larger proportion the material groundwork, the latter the spiritual conceptions. In truth, the English language, which by no mere accident has produced and upborne the greatest and most predominant poet of modern times, as distinguished from the ancient classical poetry (I can, of course, only mean Shakespear), may, with all right, be called a world-language, and, like the English people, appears destined hereafter to prevail with a sway more extensive even than its present, over all the portions of the globe. For in wealth, good sense, and closeness of structure, no other of the languages at this day spoken deserves to be compared with it, not even our German, which is torn, even as we are torn, and must first rid itself of many defects, before it can enter boldly into the lists, as a competitor with the English"—in *E. Past and Present*, I.

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#### QUESTIONS.

1. Who is the first Modern English writer? Show that the Old E. forms occurring in him, and others of the time, are no argument that the structure of the language was not completely formed about 1450.
2. What is the state of the language of the poets connecting Chaucer with Surrey, 1400—1516? of the Scottish ballad poetry? of the Northumbrian?
3. Caxton's orthography proves that the chief difference between Middle and Modern E. had disappeared when he wrote? Who is the first *idiomatic* E. writer?
4. Explain the *conservative* effects of the introduction of printing.
5. What was its action on the orthography? The irregular spelling of *stewardship*, *rich*, *it*, . . . in the sixteenth century proves that the pronunciation was uniform and much the same as now?
6. Explain the three great sources of the present inconsistent state of the orthography. What was Euphuism? In what did it effect a permanent change? How far is the present alphabet inadequate to express the actual sounds of the spoken language?
7. How many A.S. grammatical forms survive? Have these been increased by accessions from the French or Latin? Contrast English as an analytic language with the other European tongues.
8. In the comparative table, the forms *boces* and *bokis* imply a change of alphabet: *cildra* and *childer*, a change of pronunciation: *béc* and *boces*, *cycenu* and *cicenes*, a general substitution of *es* for all the A.S. plurals?

[An indefinite number of questions of this sort will be suggested by a careful study of this table.]

9. Is *chicken* the pl. of *chick*? Does the A.S. pl. in *an* account for the *n* in *children*, *kine*, etc.? Are there any surviving representatives of that pl.? Several Old E. plurals in *en*, not found in the A.S., seem to confirm Higden's statement of the existence in his time of three great English dialects, and that the present standard has resulted from the blending of two of these, rather than been derived direct from the A.S. literary standard?

10. Account for the form *us* for *his*. When did the change occur? Account for *th* in *they*, *them*; for *hi*, *heom*. Though only appearing in Modern E. these forms are probably older than the A.S.?

11. Explain the *s*, third pers. sing., pres. *loves* for *loveth*. Show that *-ing* and *-ed* are improperly called participles *present* and *past*. What are they?

12. How far do the relational words or particles answer to the logical definition of a *term* as distinguished from a mere *vox*?

13. In estimating the proportion of Saxon and Latin in the vocabulary, what consideration is the most important? Of the whole number of words how many are A.S.? Latin? Miscellaneous?

14. Classify the Latin element. State the ratios, showing the relative amount introduced at different times. The Scotch dialect exhibits two opposite tendencies? In modern times, at what several epochs was Latin appropriated most extensively?

15. Explain the first reason why English is the most absorbing of all languages. Are all the words borrowed from the Latin now retained? The second reason? Account for a second importation of the same word, and for Latin adjectives of Saxon nouns, *hinge*, *cardinal*. The third reason? Show that the present composite state of the vocabulary is preferable to one less mixed.

16. What four processes have Latin words gone through? Are all the modern representatives of the Saxonized words derived from them? The same word may have gone through all, or some of these processes? How are the Normanized distinguishable from the Anglicized? Are perfect synonyms impossible? Why do they not exist?

17. The Greek element is two-fold? Some Greek words retain their proper pl. endings. Is this a test of the *time* of their adoption? With regard to words from other sources, what distinction is to be observed? What languages have contributed most?

18. Saxon words are *specific*, Latin *generic*. Which should be preferred where we have the option of choice? Why? Classify writers according to the prevalence of one or other element in their works.

19. What is the present position of the English language, as to general diffusion? Numbers that speak it? Its future destiny?

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## ERRATA.

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Page 21, line 29, *for N. read Ab.*

" 24, " 26, *omit 3rd.*

" 28, " 17, *for pointing out of the, read pointing out the.*

" 34, " 10, *for ra read ja.*

" 101, " 20, *for at the present day? read at the present day.*

" 105, " 7, *reference should be page 20 instead of 18.*

" 114, " 8, *for to each, read at each.*





